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A BOOK OF SERMONS

BY

REPRESENTATIVE EVANGELISTS

OF THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST

VOL. II

8170

THE CHRISTIAN LEADER CORPORATION
CINCINNATI, OHIO
1926

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PUBLISHER'S INTRODUCTION

The splendid reception given Volume 1 has encouraged us to bring out Volume 2. In this present volume, we give new sermons by about twenty more of our faithful evangelists, representing all sections of the country.

The reader will notice a striking harmony and unity in the speech, or language, of all these writers. This is that trait that is characteristic of all those who love the Lord and serve Him out of the poor earth. They all speak the same thing, according to Paul's admonition.

The reader will also find the perusal of these sermons interesting because it brings out the fact that no matter how far separated these writers may be, their words ring true to the Old Gospel. When you stop to think of it, it is indeed a wonderful thing to realize that we can go to all parts of this great land of ours, yes, in facts to every continent on the globe, and find those of like precious faith, whose speech is according to the instruction given us in God's Holy Word.

The subjects in this volume are diversified, yet all leading up to the same thing: the defense of the faith and the salvation of souls.

It is our purpose to bring out several volumes similar to the two that have already been published, and this way keep before the religious world the best thoughts of our best living preachers. There are several hundred of these good men whose writings we would like to broadcast, and our aim is to use more and more of these good men, from year to year, and give to the world the product of their training and consecrated hearts and minds.

The articles and the writers speak for themselves and we offer no apology for anything they have said. They all aim to speak as the oracles of God and we give it as the message of dying men to dying men. F. L. R.

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DUST—AT THE END OF THE ROAD

DUST—AT THE END OF THE ROAD

By Chas. M. Neal

DUST

Since the word Dust occurs one hundred and seven times in the Bible, we offer no apology for writing on this subject. Dust is one of the fundamentals in both creation and redemption, though it has not been given great prominence as such. Since science and so-called science has raised the subject and given dust a great deal of prominence we deem it no waste of time to make it the subject for the pages of this book of living sermons. It used to be said that dust is "merely matter out of place." This is true when we think of dust in our houses and on our clothes and other places where it causes annoyance and displeasure. But dust—just dust—humble and despised dust—has uses important and glorious. It is our purpose in this sermon to elevate dust. The doctrine of dust is fundamental.

MORE DUST

Without atmospheric dust the moist air would keep our clothing clammy and our walls and furniture damp. Without it rain would fall without giving due notice and without forming into the huge splashing drops. Dust is at the center of the rain drop, forms the base of our clouds—the fleecy ones of our clear days and the dark ones of our storms. By dust we behold the slanting ray of light as it falls across our rooms. The base of the bow of promise is in dust and by it we behold the beauty of the sunset. More still—and here is the wonder of it—God's transcendent wonders and superlative joys for you and me rise from the basis of dust—just humble and despised dust.

GLORIOUS DUST

There are intimations of an immortality, yet by many unsensed, which rise grandly from a foundation of dust.

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Shakespeare speaks of a "dust that is a little gilt." Byron said "half dust—half deity." There is a very beautiful, poetical and yet true statement of the above intimations in the inspired and prophetic prayer of Hannah. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dung-hill, to set them among princes and to make them to inherit the throne of his glory." From beggar to prince—from dung-hill to throne—from dust to glory! How truly wonderful! How sublime is this revelation of His love! How wonderful is the demonstration of His power. Men "dwell in houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust," but in the consummation of God's promises we not only partake of His divine nature, but shall sit with Him on the throne of His glory. From Dust to Deity is a most glorious destiny.

DUST AT THE END OF THE ROAD

What meaneth all this dust, more dust, glorious dust and dust at the end of the road? We neither speak lightly nor in parables, but plain, simple words of truth and soberness. Dust of the ground is the foundation element of triune man. The body is subject to the redemption purchased on the Cross at such great price. Christ died for the whole man as well as for all men. There is a bit of dust connected with each soul which is destined for eternity. What that dust is and where it is at the end of the road determines the destiny of the whole man. We wish to discuss salvation from the Dust side of man rather than the Deity side and thus exalt, more largely, the work and name of man's Saviour.

"The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground—out of it was thou taken; for dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return." Man's house is of clay and his foundation is in the dust. The bodies of all men are the same and all subject to adoption into the heavenly realm. "To wit, the redemption of our body" (Gen. 2: 7; 3: 19; Job 4: 17-21; Psa. 103: 14; Rom. 8: 23).

DUST ON THE WAY

For accountable beings there are two ways. Look at the road. On one of these two ways your dust and mine

moves inevitably toward its end. Choice has determined which way we go. Many things enter into it—knowledge, environment and persuasion—but after all comes the choice, and for that choice we are responsible. Decision determines Destiny—not only of our souls, but the destiny of our dust as well. "The path of the just is a shining light, that shineth more and more unto perfect day. The way of the wicked is a darkness; they know not at what they stumble." "The wise shall inherit glory; but shame shall be the promotion of fools." Where and what that dust shall be at the end of the road lies in the power of our own choosing. Which road are you on—whither goeth the dust?" (Matt. 7: 13; John 14: 6; Prov. 3: 35; 4: 18, 19; Josh. 24: 15).

ON THE SHINING PATH

Glorious dust comes from the shining path. There are many passages and different lists which deal with the fundamentals of the Christian life and portray its orderly progress. Any or all would be helpful, but space forbids even the mention of most of them. For brevity and conciseness we select Proverbs 4: 23-27. Each one of these five verses shows the Christian life in orderly progress. A reference to the diagram and a very brief comment on each Item must suffice for this section.

THE GUARDED HEART.—"*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*" When we remember that "As he thinketh in his heart so is he" and that "from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," we begin to see the importance of a well-guarded heart." (Prov. 23: 7; Matt. 12: 34; Phil. 2: 13.)

THE CLEAN MOUTH.—"*Put away from thee a forward mouth and perverse lips put far from thee.*" The clean mouth follows in order from the guarded heart just like the faucet from the reservoir. No purity of speech can come from a heart full of evil. Suppression of lips can never answer for a cleansing of the heart. Get started right. (I Peter 3: 10; Heb. 13: 10; Eph. 5: 4; Jas. 1: 21; 3: 9-14.)

THE SINGLE EYE—"*Let thine eyes look right on, and*

let thine eyelids look straight before thee." The guarded heart and the clean mouth will be a wonderful help in giving the proper perspective of life's way. Singleness of eye clears the vision for the step to follow. (Matt. 6: 23; Jer. 10: 23.)

THE PONDERED PATH.—*"Ponder the path of thy feet and let all thy ways be established."* If one's feet stand on this step there is bound to be joy in the life. Your feet may be in the way of sorrow—the path may lead through the way of great sacrifice, but it is in that case the same as the Master Himself has trod and there is a "joy set before you." "I reckon the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward" (Rom. 8: 18; Heb. 12: 1, 2; Eph. 5: 15-20).

THE ESTABLISHED FOOT.—*"Turn not to the right hand nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil."* "Stand fast in the Lord." When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straightened; and when thou runnest thou shalt not stumble." The "Ornament of Grace" from wisdom's hand is upon this ripening Christian life and "a crown of glory" is just over the line. "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord" (Prov. 3: 23-26; 4: 9-12; Matt. 25: 21).

THE PATH OF THE WICKED.—*"Shame shall be the promotion of fools."* Behold dust going down. There are many passages which show this downward progress and depict it step by step. Taking the reverse of the five upward steps and tracing out the results would prove beneficial. The unguarded heart boiling over with "filthiness and overflowing of wickedness" through the unclean mouth which speaks "great swelling words." The evil eye taking no notice to the reckless, thoughtless downward progress and leaves the path unpondered and at the end the foot slips into a Christless grave and into an unchanging and eternal hell. "Soul and body in hell" is the word of Christ Himself concerning the doom of the dust on road to ruin. (Prov. 3: 35; 4: 14-19; Jas. 1: 21; Jude 16: 23.)

THE GRAVITATION OF SIN.—Debasing influences which beset the child of woe on wrong roads are pro-

gressive in their downward trend. To set this forth we have chosen Romans 1 : 18-31. This gravitation of sin is set forth in five steps, each bringing increasing darkness until wholly given up of God the traveler crosses the line into outer darkness. The text is too long to quote in full, hence we ask that each reader supplement this paragraph by a careful study of the entire section. A reference to the diagram and the use of the following outline will help to grasp the significance of the passage.

The Natural and Devilish Heart.—The natural heart is deceitful above all things. Its wisdom is earthly, sensual and devilish. Knowing God they failed to glorify Him as God and be thankful to Him. This failure forms the first step down. Rejectors of Christ are on this step and in great danger. (Eccl. 8 : 11 ; Jer. 17 : 9 ; Jas. 3 : 15.)

The Inward, Downward Look. Rom. 1 : 21, with I Cor. 1 : 18-29.—They looked *In* and not *Up*. They reasoned and did not believe, and hence "became vain in their reasonings and their foolish heart was darkened." "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

The Exaltation of Self. Rom. 1 : 22.—"Professing themselves to be wise they became fools. Here is the folly of wise fools. Wherever self sits, God can not. Where self is enthroned God must soon go. It was so in this case and so in every case.

God Is Belittled. Rom. 1 : 23.—"And changed the glory of the incorruptible God, for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts and creeping things."

Given Up Of God. (Rom. 1 : 24, 26, 28-31).—Three times it is said, "God gave them up." Left to themselves they are said to be "filled with all unrighteousness" (Verse 29). Then twenty terms are used to denote their heart condition. Just over the line from the fifth step lies the eternity of woe where God is not. This is the end of the road for the debased dust which finds a place in the devil's abode. (Matt. 25 : 41.)

CHANGED TO DUST

We speak now of the condition across the line. Changed dust has to do with "they that are Christ's at

His coming." "Behold I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. The dust in corruption shall be dust incorruptible and mortal dust becomes immortal by that deathless change at Christ's coming. The resurrection concerns the body. The tombs are opened and they that sleep in the dust arise. The placing in full as sons and their revealing awaits the adoption which is "the redemption of the body." We are now sons, but it does not yet appear what we shall be. The appearance of our sonship is demonstrated by the changed bodies at the coming of Christ, when our clay bodies become glorious and shining like the body of our glorious Saviour. The working is unexplainable to us, but will be wholly satisfactory when we shall be like Him and see Him as He is.

Bodily resurrection is a teaching of the word. A body is sown—a body comes from the grave. One is natural, the other spiritual; not the same body, for a change has taken place, yet after the change the identity is not lost. Much discussion has been had as to whether that part and parcel of dust once forming the body of the long dead saint will have a part in the changed body. We can arrive somewhere near a satisfactory answer to this when we remember that the body of Jesus did not see corruption. In the tomb his flesh rested in hope and the same body was raised to die no more and therefore immortal. The same truth is discernable also in the changed bodies of saints who may be living at Christ's coming. The change is in a moment. On this side mortal bodies—on that side immortal bodies. Mortality has been swallowed up of life. (Dan. 12: 2; Matt. 27: 52; Luke 24: 39-43; John 5: 28, 29; Acts 2: 26; Rom. 6: 9; 8: 23; I Cor. 15: 35-58; II Cor. 5: 4; Phil. 3: 20, 21; I Thess. 4: 13-18; I John 3: 2.)

DUST ON THE THRONE

This is "Dust at the end of the road." "He that overcometh I will give to sit down with me in my throne." Wonderful place, glorious promise! Our bodies now like His. Where He is we are. What is His is ours. Not because of our worth, but for His grace. Praise the Lord! The line begins with the new birth and ends at

the birth from the tomb and in the rewards beyond. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings of eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not be faint." Here is the destiny of the dust of the saints of God.

We speak of the realms of the blest,
That country so bright and so fair;
And oft are its glories confessed,
But what must it be to be there?"

(Rev. 3: 21; John 17: 24; Rom. 8: 17; Isa. 40: 31.)

WHAT THEN?

"After the Christian's tears,
After his fights and fears,
After his weary cross,
'All things below but loss'—
What then?
Oh, then—a holy calm,
Resting on Jesus' arm;
Oh! then—a deeper love
For the pure home above.

"After this holy calm,
This rest on Jesus' arm,
After this deepened love
For the pure home above—
What then?
Oh! then—work for him,
Perishing souls to win,
Then Jesus' presence near,
Death's darkest hour to cheer.

"And when the work is done,
When the last soul is won,
When Jesus' love and power
Bring the expected hour—
What then?
Oh! then the crown is given
Oh! then—rest is heaven
Endless life, in endless day,
Sin and sorrow passed away."

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THE WRATH OF GOD ABIDETH

The doctrine that God is too good to dam the dust of the disobedient is not to be believed by any who really count God's Word as final. The word "wrath" occurs one hundred and ninety-seven times in the Bible. Of this number it is used of God one hundred and twenty-five times. The word "anger" is used two hundred and thirty-seven times. One hundred and sixty-seven times it is used of God. God is good and merciful, and is a God of love. He is also just and can not be merciful at the expense of justice. His abundant mercy is offered in Jesus Christ. Those who refuse Him must stand on their own merits and from such stand must fall, for by works none can be justified. The faithful preacher and teacher can say only what the Lord says, "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! It shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him" (Isa. 3: 10; John 3: 16; Acts 17: 30, 31; Luke 13: 3, 5; John 8: 21-24; II Peter 3: 10).

A FIRE IS KINDLED IN HIS ANGER

A fire is kindled in God's anger. Some God-rejectors were sent down to the pit and consumed by fire in the fierceness of His anger. The time is coming when others shall die in like manner. Even the earth is stored with fire reserved for the judgment of ungodly men. There is a sorer punishment than physical death. Death does not end all, for after death cometh the judgment. (Deut. 32: 22; Num. 16: 29-35; Jude 11; Rev. 19: 19; II Peter 3: 7 (R. V. Margin); Heb. 9: 27; 10: 26-31.)

DOOMED DUST

There is a fire prepared for the devil and his angels. It is a place where there is no rest or repose, a place of no refreshment. It is a place of pain and toil, vexation and torment. Its duration is forever and ever. This is the end of the road for the doomed dust of man. The wrath of the Lamb is come. Jesus has said, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill

the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10: 28).

Jesus is coming again and lost sinners are to suffer eternal punishment in the same place with the devil and his angels. Look at these scriptures, item by item:

1. The place is prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matt. 25: 41.)
2. Jesus proposes casting some people there. (Matt. 10: 28.)
3. The beast and the false prophet will go there. (Rev. 10: 20.)
4. The devil will go there. (Rev. 20: 10.)
5. Some people will go there. (Rev. 20: 14, 15.)
6. All bad and unforgiven people will go there. (Rev. 21: 8.)

We have come to Revelation 21 with the story. There is but one more chapter and it makes and does not intimate any change. The unbelieving—body and soul—are in the lake of fire, which is the second death. This is dust at the end of the road—doomed dust. The saddest picture of the Bible is here. Abundant pardon, repeated offer and silent refusal and doom come. Alas! it is too late.

WHAT THEN?

"After the joys of earth,
After its songs of mirth,
After its hours of light,
After its dreams so bright—
What then?
Only an empty name,
Only a weary frame.
Only a conscience smart,
Only an aching heart.

"After this empty name,
After this weary frame,
After this conscience smart,
After this aching heart,
What then?

Only a sad farewell
To a world loved too well,
Only a silent bed
With the forgotten dead.

"After this sad farewell
To a world loved too well,
After this silent bed
With the forgotten dead—
What then?
Oh! then—the judgment throne!
Oh! then—the last hope—gone!
Then all the woes that dwell
In an eternal HELL!"

JESUS AND NICODEMUS, OR BORN ANEW

JESUS AND NICODEMUS, OR BORN ANEW

By J. H. Horton

So long as there are people who are subject to the Gospel call, it will be necessary to study the subject that was discussed by Jesus and Nicodemus which is recorded in John 3: 1-21. There is perhaps no portion of the Scriptures that is more generally misunderstood and over which there is more controversy. Neither is there any portion of the Scriptures that more vitally concerns every responsible human being. Therefore, let us examine every word that both Jesus and Nicodemus uttered in this wonderful conversation.

"Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: the same came unto him by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him." We learn from this that Nicodemus was a religious man. The Pharisees were the straitest sect of the Jewish religion. (Acts 26: 5.) Nicodemus, then, was perhaps one of the most devout religionists of his day. Do you not suppose it is possible for a man to be religious today and yet be in an unsaved condition? He was also a ruler of the Jews, a member of the highest court in the Jewish nation. He may be compared to a chief justice of the Supreme Court of the United States of America. He knew the law and was no doubt one of the greatest jurists of his day. If he had not known the law, he could never have been a member of the Jewish Sanhedrim. We may, therefore, expect him to deal with the teaching of Jesus in both a scientific and a logical way.

We note that he came unto Jesus by night. Many teachers have taught us to look upon Nicodemus as a coward because he came to interview Jesus by night. Surely this can not be the case! Let us reason from another viewpoint. We must remember that he had duties

during the day. Court was in session during daylight; and, if he were like modern lawyers, he had office hours. Do you not suppose his office hours and court would require most of his time during daylight? Then would he be a coward because he sought an interview with Jesus after night? Besides, Jesus was never a man of leisure. Jesus could not have had a private interview with any man very often in His life. All who read the Bible know that multitudes followed and heard Jesus almost every day. So we can not believe Nicodemus was a coward because he came to Jesus by night, but that necessity may have required his doing so.

Notice how Nicodemus approached Jesus. "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him." Does Nicodemus mean that he and some other members of the Sanhedrim knew Jesus was a teacher come from God, or that he and the Jewish people knew it? Either view would express the truth, because no one believed Jesus to be just a common man. Suppose a reporter should approach a modern preacher with a little eulogy as Nicodemus approached Jesus. What course would the average preacher pursue? Would he speak boldly of the doctrine of Jesus? Would he go back to his own childhood and magnify his hardships and disadvantages and come down his life a step at a time until it is apparent that by his own initiative and skill he has made a success of all his plans, coming out of college with the honors of his class, and now in the face of many difficulties he has risen to his present success as a minister? The next morning after the interview, would his face flush with a satisfaction known only to the vanity of pride when the newsboy hands him a copy of the morning's paper which bears in bold type the description he gave of himself and of his success? This is perhaps the course Nicodemus thought Jesus would pursue. Who could give such a marvelous account of poverty, difficulties, and success as Jesus could, even at the time Nicodemus came to Him by night? Where is the preacher who has made the success that Jesus had made up to this time in His life?

But Jesus was not to converse with Nicodemus on any

such subject. The vanity of pride did not appeal to Him. His answer to his eulogy from Nicodemus was by far the most astonishing utterance that mortal man had ever heard. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except one be born anew, he can not see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus was not expecting such an answer as this, and it could have been but an astonishment to him. This answer has been no less an astonishment to the world than it was to Nicodemus. If there had been no further conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, this statement of Jesus could be but a mystery to the world now. Fortunately this conversation did not close here.

Nicodemus unhesitatingly answered Jesus' statement with an argument which is as scientific as any can be made. No lawyer has ever more completely demolished the argument of his opponent than Nicodemus did that of Jesus from a human viewpoint. If Jesus had made no answer to the second speech of Nicodemus, the world could but believe that Nicodemus had the best of the argument. Nicodemus, of course, failed to see the viewpoint of Jesus; but he saw his own viewpoint well and made it count in the words: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Nothing could have been more absurd to the mind of Nicodemus than that an old man be born anew, and he expressed his feelings so others can see his point.

Although a jurist of the highest rank and with the most polished skill had hurled an argument at Jesus, expressing the utter absurdity of His position as it appeared to him, Jesus was not to be shaken. But He deliberately proceeded to analyze His first statement with the words: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew. The wind (Gr. Pneuma) bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not when it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." This is but an explanation of the first utter-

ance to Nicodemus which declares that one must be born anew before he can enter into the kingdom of God. We see in the first words of this explanation a complete refutation of Nicodemus' criticism. Instead of the birth in question being of the flesh, as Nicodemus had supposed, it is made clear that the elements of birth are water and Spirit. Since this is so emphatic, Nicodemus' criticism is no longer of weight, for it is certain that an old man can be born of water and the Spirit. Jesus would have Nicodemus marvel no longer, reminding him that whatever is born of flesh is flesh and whatever is born of Spirit is spirit. Thus Nicodemus is made to see that instead of speaking words just to benefit the flesh, Jesus has spoken words in the interest of the spiritual, or inward, man. And to further illustrate the distinction besaid unto thee, Ye must be born anew. The wind (Gr. (Gr. Pneuma) bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The Greek word "Pneuma" which is here translated by the word "wind," according to Young's Analytical Concordance, is translated by the word "spirit," or "Holy Spirit," two hundred eighty-eight times; while it is translated by the word "wind" but once in all the New Testament, and that time is in John 3: 8. There is no good reason why it should not be translated by the word "Spirit" here. In fact the translators of the American Standard Version of the Bible give a marginal reading of this passage, which is "The Spirit breatheth" where it will, etc. . The literal idea in the original of this passage, then, is no doubt a reference to the work of the Holy Spirit through the apostles which was at that time in the future. It evidently means that the Holy Spirit would inspire whom he would to speak to intelligent people, but that the people would not be able by their natural senses to discern whence he came nor whither he would go. "So," he said, "is every one that is born of the Spirit." That is but another way of saying the spiritual man, the inward man, who is to be benefited by the birth of water and the Spirit, is just as invisible to the natural, physical

eye as the Holy Spirit who should inspire the promulgators of the Gospel in the apostolic age would be.

Nicodemus was now convinced that his criticism, which he had so scientifically stated in his effort to refute the position of Jesus, was, in the light of the explanation which Jesus had given, without foundation. Instead, therefore, of trying to strengthen his criticism, he yields the point in saying: "How can these things be?" If modern religious teachers would as readily yield their theories, doctrines and dogmas, to the teaching of Jesus as Nicodemus did, the world would be much better off than it is under present conditions.

The field was now opened to Jesus, and Nicodemus, an earnest listener, was ready to hear what He had to say. Jesus, first expressed astonishment that Nicodemus was a teacher of Israel and did not know the distinction between the fleshly and the spiritual man. We, too, are to be astonished at present-day teachers, because they can not discern between the teaching of Jesus and that of men. Jesus did not long linger with this thought, but hastened to further instruction in matters essential to the safety of Nicodemus. "We speak," said He, "that which we know and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. If I told you earthly things and ye believed not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?" This is but another way of saying, I have illustrated the things leading to citizenship in the kingdom of God by the earthly figure of a birth, and you do not understand; how could you, therefore, understand if I should tell you heavenly things, or the same things in terms without figures? These things will be told without figures when the Holy Spirit inspires teachers to tell people plainly how to become citizens of God's kingdom. Thus we see that Jesus appreciated the fact that Nicodemus was unable to understand all the details of the kingdom of God which was so soon to be established on the earth.

Notwithstanding the fact that Nicodemus was not able to understand all the things that were so rapidly to come to pass, Jesus mentioned some things that should happen

before any one could enjoy the benefits to be had in being born anew. He said: "No one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven." Jesus here told Nicodemus that He came from heaven, and that He must ascend to heaven, which ascension we know was future at that time. If Jesus had told Nicodemus that He would die, rise again, and ascend to heaven before any one could enjoy the benefits of being born anew in language free from figures, Nicodemus perhaps could have understood it no better than he did. Hence Jesus continued to speak to him in figures. Jesus then told him of the most tragic event in the history in a most beautiful figure. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in him have eternal life." While in the wilderness between Egypt and the Promised Land, the children of Israel complained that they had been brought out of Egypt into the wilderness, and that they had no bread; so God sent fiery serpents among them. Many were bitten by these serpents, and not a few died from the effect thereof. Moses entreated God for them. God instructed Moses to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole and lift it up that those who were bitten might look upon it and be healed. (Num. 21: 4-9.) No one knew of that event better than Nicodemus, but what Jesus meant by "the lifting up of the Son of man" must have been one of the mysteries of which he wondered. Perhaps we might wonder what he meant by it too if He had not said: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself. But this he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die" (John 12: 32, 33). In the light of this passage we now know that Jesus told Nicodemus of His death, which was to be effected through a process of "lifting up." If He had told Nicodemus that sometime in the near future men would arrest Him and lead Him before the court, of which Nicodemus was a member, and that He would be convicted and crucified, could Nicodemus have believed it? Do you not suppose it would have offended Nicodemus, since it would have appeared that Jesus had no

confidence in him? That is precisely what Jesus told him in the beautiful figure which He chose. He then broke forth in the rapture of God's love, spanning all the time of God's dealing with fallen man, until the redeemed in Christ Jesus sing the chorus of praise to Him throughout the eternal ages, in the sentence: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life."

After affirming that God sent His Son to save the world, He told Nicodemus what he must do until all these things should come to pass. His instruction from verse 18 to verse 21 is intended to teach Nicodemus what he should do until these things should be fulfilled. He could do no more than to believe on Jesus in everything he taught and thus be sure to be in the light which God had sent into the world.

Let us follow Nicodemus from this conversation until he witnesses the events pointed out by Jesus in the conversation by night. When the Jews were questioning among themselves as to who Jesus was, there was division among them. When they would have taken Him, division prevented it. "The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why did ye not bring him? The officers answered, Never man so spake. The Pharisees therefore answered them, Are ye also led astray? Hath any of the rulers believed on him? or any of the Pharisees? But this multitude that knoweth not the law are accursed. Nicodemus saith unto them (he that came to him before, being one of them), Doth our law judge a man, except it hear from himself and know what he doeth?" (John 7: 45-51). This shows us that Nicodemus was yet in the light and that his faith in Jesus was so strong that he would make a defense for Him in the highest court in the land.

The next time we meet Nicodemus is at the burial of Jesus. "And after these things Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked of Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore and took away the body. And there came also Nico-

demus, he who first came to him by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds" (John 19: 38, 39). There is no doubt that Nicodemus was a believer in Jesus. I wonder if he spoke to Joseph, while they were burying the body of Jesus, of the fact that Jesus told him of the "lifting up of the Son of man" when he talked to Him by night. I also wonder if he told Joseph that the "lifting up of the Son of man" would be like "Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness." Did they realize that the crucifixion was the "lifting up of the Son of man"? Then again I wonder how the report of the guards who watched the tomb of Jesus affected Nicodemus. (Matt. 28: 11.) Did he expect, after hearing the report of the guards, to hear next of the ascension of which Jesus told him in the conversation by night?

Do you imagine Nicodemus was among the great number that assembled in the city of Jerusalem, immediately after the great noise which so much resembled that of a "rushing mighty wind," on the day of Pentecost, recorded in the second chapter of Acts? I also wonder if Nicodemus was among the number of those who were "amazed and marveled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born? . . . we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God" (Acts 2: 7, 8, 11). Knowing Nicodemus as we do, we could never believe that he was among the number that accused the apostles of being drunk. But we rather imagine he would be of those who would listen attentively to the defense which Peter made leading to the great lesson to all the world. (Acts 2: 14.) What a thrill all must have felt when Peter declared this to be a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel! (Acts 2: 16.) Then imagine how all the truly conscientious must have leaned forward to hear every word when Peter said: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves also know," etc. (Acts 2: 22-41). Do you think Nicodemus could have associated the

"mighty works and wonders and signs" mentioned by Peter with the language with which he approached Jesus when "he came to him by night"? Then when Peter told of the death of Jesus on the cross, and when Nicodemus remembered his own experience at the burial of Jesus, the "lifting up of the Son of man," which Nicodemus heard when he came to Jesus by night, must have run through his mind like lightning across a cloud. Don't you think his soul must have been so stirred that in longing anxiety he listened as Peter declared Jesus to be exalted at the right hand of God? (Acts 2: 33.) Then, if Nicodemus were present, he must have again remembered that Jesus said something to him of the ascension when he "came to him by night." But Peter had no more than declared His ascension when he mentioned the promise which Jesus had made of the Holy Spirit which, said he, "He hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear" (Acts 2: 33). If Nicodemus were present he must have remembered that Jesus told him that "the Spirit breatheth where it will," etc. (Margin of John 3: 8.) Was this a fulfillment of that promise? Have we not seen that Jesus died, that He arose, that He ascended, and that the Holy Spirit has come? Are not all these things manifest before us? Then Peter declared that God had made that same Jesus whom they had crucified both Lord and Christ. (Acts 2: 36.) All the conscientious were pricked in their hearts and cried out, "Brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2: 37). Will the answer be the "heavenly things" which Nicodemus could not understand when he "came to Jesus by night"? He had waited patiently until all the signs which Jesus promised had come. Now the message, giving the answer to their question, flows from the apostles as Peter said: "Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38). Gladly receiving this information three thousand were baptized, and the Lord added them to the church. (Acts 2: 47.) These were the first to be born of water and the Spirit as Jesus had promised Nicodemus. Their wills, hearts, and souls were completely overwhelmed by the teaching

of the Holy Spirit through the apostles, and they were baptized, immersed; therefore, they were "born of water and the Spirit." Those who have done the same things from the heart since have been born anew. Those who have never done the same things from the heart since have never been born anew. Those who have not been born anew are yet in their alien sins, and those who die in their sins can not be with Jesus. (John 8: 21.) Reader, have you been born anew? Do you think a few drops of water sprinkled or poured on you will do as well as to be buried with Him in baptism? (Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12.) If you think this you have never submitted to the authority of the Spirit to say nothing of being "born anew," "of water and the Spirit."

Follow every case of conversion in the New Testament and be convinced that the Spirit teaches that men must believe Jesus, reform themselves, confess Jesus before men, and be buried with Him in baptism. This is the only way to be "born anew." If you have not been born anew, will you not do so now? Then faithfully serve Him unto death and all will be well with your soul.

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

By LeRoy Elkins

"Husbands love your wives as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. Even so ought husbands to love their own wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth it and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; because we are members of his body. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak in regard of Christ and the church" (Eph. 5: 25-32).

The fact that Christ and the church are but one body is clearly set forth in this text as well as in many others.

In spite of such plain Scripture statements the greater portion of the teachers in modern denominations declare that men are saved and afterward take their place in the church or "in some church." That all the saved of the earth are one in Christ is as clear as the noon-day sun. That all the saved are "added to the church" is as positive as that Jesus is the Son of God. That not a saved man is left out is unequivocally plain.

Why talk of "joining some church"? It must be done to care for a false view of conversion and of the church.

The intimate relationship between Christ and the church is illustrated by husband and wife—"the two shall be one flesh."

"There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in the one hope of your calling" (Eph. 4: 4).

There can no more be several churches—bodies—with Christ as head of each, than there can be legitimately several wives, each of them having one and the same husband.

It is only false churches—harlots—that make such demands in the Christian Age.

In Isaiah, the fourth chapter, we have the picture of modern, man-made churches under the figure of false women.

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name (Baptist Church of Christ, Methodist Church of Christ, Church of Christ, Scientist, etc.), to take away our reproach from among men."

Any one can see that these seven women represent false churches, the kind that manage their affairs, plan their own doctrines and set forth the rules that shall govern their respective churches.

Does God have several institutions, or does He have one? Can men be born into the family of God and not at the same time be members of the church? Can they be translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of Christ and not at the same time be a member of the church and a child of God?

As to institution, is there any difference between the kingdom of Christ on the earth and the church of Christ on the earth?

How many folks are in the kingdom of Christ that are not in the Church of Christ? How many children of God are yet out of the kingdom, how many yet unsaved? None—not one.

Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church, the chief cornerstone of the temple of God, that holy place in which God dwells by his Spirit. Are there two institutions, one called the church and the other the temple? Do those who are members of the church compose the lively stones in the temple? Are there any folk in the church that are not in the temple? Are there unsaved folks in the church?

Surely the New Testament institution is set forth in the New Testament under a variety of names to illustrate it from different viewpoints. The church presents the idea of the "called out," while the kingdom idea presents the "rule" feature—Jesus is Lord, King, and absolute Monarch.

The Church of Christ, therefore, is not a democracy. Its rules and regulations are not determined by a majority vote. The Household of God sees this divine institution as a family, while the flock idea presents it as a sheepfold, with Jesus as the Shepherd of the sheep.

We are His children because we have been born again and are thus in the family of God. But if we have been born again we are new creatures in Christ, and *if in Him at all* we are in Him because we have been baptized into Him. (Gal. 3: 26, 27.) To be in Christ is to be in His body, which is the church. (Col. 1: 18-24; Eph. 1: 22, 23.) Jesus is the Head of the body, the church, and to not be a member of the church is to fail of connection with the Head.

Jesus is the chief cornerstone in the temple of God, and those who are not in His temple are not builded on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

Certainly there is no difference between the temple of God and the house of God. "Builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2: 21, 22).

Do we read in the Scriptures that any one was born again, saved, and afterward "joined the church"? Do you find where children were born and later joined the Father's family? Is the family of God composed of those who are saved? Are any saved folks left out of Christ? Is there any difference in being "in Christ" and "in His body"? Is the body of Christ and the Church of Christ the same?

"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature" (II Cor. 5: 17).

Is to be in Christ more or less than to be in his body? Who will dare to say that to be "in Christ" is one thing and to be in his body, the church, another? Who will say that to be "in Christ" does not mean, as to location, "In the church, which is His body"?

When the New Testament Institution is mentioned as a building Jesus Christ is set forth as its foundation, when it is presented as a body he is set forth as its Head. As a kingdom He is the King, and yet he is not the foundation of one institution, the head over another, and still king over another.

Just as Jesus Christ is set forth as a lion and a lamb, son and a star, a rose and a root out of dry ground, Saviour, Priest, Redeemer, etc., yet there is but one character who is set forth from these different viewpoints; so the one divine institution is presented to us as the kingdom, church, household of God, temple of God, flock, vineyard, etc., yet we have but one divine institution as we have but one Saviour.

THE LAW OF THE KING

Is the kingdom of Christ governed by the law of the King? Is the church of the New Testament governed by a different law? If so, what is the law to the subjects of the kingdom and what is the law that governs the members of the church? Is the church of the New Testament a democracy, governed by the law of the majority, while the subjects of Christ's kingdom are governed by the law of the King? If men are in the kingdom who are not in the church what law are they under—what class of people would have the power to deal with them for disloyalty to the King? If they should never come into the church (supposing that such a thing might be), who would have the authority to deal with them?

The church, through its bishops, can deal with unruly church members, but can they deal with those who are Christians and are not members of the church? Can such a condition exist?

ALL SAVED IN ONE BODY
Eph. 2: 14-16

> "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to them who were nigh."

Here the apostle boldly declares that both Jews and

Gentiles are reconciled to God in one body. It is as clear as the language of the age can express it that salvation is in one body and that the one body of the New Testament is the one church of the New Testament.

To say that some folks come into this one divine institution who are not at that time saved is to say that men can be in the kingdom of Christ who have never been born again, can be in that one body without reconciliation.

We are told in Acts 2: 47 that "the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." Are there any in the church that the Lord did not add? What course did they pursue? "God hath placed the members, every one of them, in the body as it hath pleased him." This is Paul's illustration drawn from the human body to illustrate membership in the church. (I Cor. 12: 14-28.)

IS ONE CHURCH AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?

Many people are of the opinion that all religions are good; that all are useful; that there is room and need for all, and that all find equal favor in the sight of God.

Many think that among the various denominations of the religious confusion that "one church is just as good as another, the church does not save you and therefore it makes no difference where you find your church home."

These and kindred opinions are heard from thousands and must be their very innermost belief. If this theory be true, it should be spread abroad and driven home into the minds of men; if it be unreasonable and unscriptural it should be unmasked and thrown aside. If true it is a blessing; if false it is a curse to all who hold it, and shape their religious course by it.

A Logical Conclusion from such premise would be that vice is as good as virtue; that idolatry is as good as the worship of the true God; falsehood is as good as truth.

If one church is as good as another, then human institutions are just as helpful, just as good, as divine ones.

If one church is as good as another then one doctrine is just as good as another, for no two of them teach the same things in what they term doctrine.

Why should the Holy Spirit warn: "Whosoever

transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God" (II John v. 9), and again, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (v. 10)? If it makes no difference about doctrine, why this warning?

Since Paul declares in Rom. 6: 17 that when we "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine delivered unto us we were then made free from sin and became the servants of righteousness," how dare any one say that it makes no difference about your doctrine?

If a man has false doctrine he can not be made free from sin, since when we obey the form of doctrine found in the Gospel we are then made free from sin. No sound doctrine, no salvation, no man can obey the form of doctrine found in the Scriptures while his doctrine is wrong. One who holds that all religions are equally good, one church is as good as another, places the various Pagan religions on a par with Christianity, falsehood on a par with truth.

Some of these religions, some of these churches, teach polygamy; some permit and sanction concubinage; some claim that God is yet making special revelations, etc. Are such religions as good as one that teaches the truth as set forth by our Lord? Are such churches as good as the one that our Lord gave to the world that condemns such things?

But we are told that "we are Christians and what we mean is that among professed Christians one church is as good as another, that it makes no difference which church you belong to among Christian denominations." Here is where the cloven foot of error is seen most clearly. "Upon this rock I will build my church" was said by our Lord, and to belong to any other than that one is to be identified with an institution that is not divine. If a church that came into existence through the work of men is just as good as the one divine institution established by the Saviour, may it not also be true that a god made by the hand of man is just as good as the one true and living God?

If gods made by human hands must go into the dump heap before we can please God, why not the churches that are humanly devised?

The Catholic Church teaches that "the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, contains the body and blood, the soul and divinity of Christ Jesus our Lord. It is not bread," they say, "but the living Christ himself, under the outward appearance of bread." In the presence of the Holy Eucharist, Catholics must bow their heads and bend their knees in adoration. To those who do not believe that Christ is really and truly present, this Catholic belief and practice, objectively considered, is simply idolatrous. They can not look on it in any other light, for to them it is bread that is set forth to bring Christ to our minds, as the bread of life that was broken on Calvary for us.

If this Catholic doctrine concerning the Supper is true then they are the only folks who carry out the requirements of the Lord in that matter. If the other view be correct, how can Catholics be other than a bunch of idolators.

Among the various denominations of today there is nothing to commend them to a thinking world as being the church of the New Testament. If the denominations as such constitute the family of God, then we have a hopelessly divided family.

If the divided condition in the religious realm represents the kingdom of Christ, the house of God, or the temple of God, then hear the Saviour tell what must happen to it: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand" (Matt. 12: 25).

Just as sure as the denominations of this age represent the kingdom of Christ, just that sure must His kingdom come to naught, Jesus Himself being the witness.

The Church of Christ is older than any denomination in the world.

The Church of Christ was established and was complete for hundreds of years before there was any denomination.

It follows, therefore, that *no denomination, as such,*

is any part of the Church of Christ. If any denomination, *as such, is any part of the Church of Christ,* then the Church of Christ did not have all its parts, was not a complete institution, before that denomination came into existence. But since *the church was complete before there was any denomination,* why could it not now exist without them and independent of them? Since men were in the Church of Christ, the church of the New Testament, and the church was a complete institution, having all its parts, does it not follow that the man who joins a denomination *does not even join a part of the church of the New Testament.*

Unsaved men can join modern denominations, they tell us; but *the Lord adds saved people to the church* that Jesus built. (Acts 2: 47.)

NO LUCKY-GO-EASY METHOD WILL DO

"God seeketh such to worship Him as worship in spirit and in truth."

Not only must men worship God in the Spirit—not a mere formal service—but he must worship according to truth. If men can acceptably worship God, because they are honest—though they have not learned the truth as to how he has ordered us to worship—then Paganism is worth as much to its devotees as Christianity is to those who worship at its shrine.

Since the theory that one religion is as good as another; one church is as good as another, leads logically to the conclusion that falsehood may be worth just as much as the truth; vice as much as virtue; idolatry as much as the true worship of God, we must give up that theory root and branch. The truth about God and our duties to Him can not be trifled with by men and made unimportant by any such slipshod methods of reasoning (unreasoning.) Truth is before us and demands a hearing.

The man who does not "know the truth" can not be "made free;" and the man who "does not obey the truth" has nothing but "indignation and wrath" before him; and the man who does not "worship in both the Spirit and according to truth" is rendering a "false worship." (Matt. 15: 9.)

SOME NEW THINGS

SOME NEW THINGS

By W. A. Cameron

When Solomon was king over Israel, he tried to search out through human wisdom and understanding of everything under heaven. (Eccl. 1: 12.) As a result of his research he arrived at the following conclusion: "That which hath been is that which shall be, and that which hath been done is that which shall be done, and there is no new thing under the sun" (Eccl. 1: 9). We do not doubt but what Solomon believed exactly what he said; neither do we question his sincerity or consciousness, and it is more than probable that many people believed what he said, and some are still believing it. But Solomon was mistaken, mistaken in that, just as he was mistaken in some other things, and as many wise and conscientious people are mistaken about some things today. Then, it will be the purpose of this short sermon to set forth some things of which Solomon never knew, and that all of his wisdom never could have fathomed. Just as man's wisdom has never been able to fathom God and His ways.

Starting from Egypt with the Israelites, we come to Mount Sinai, where we camp with them eleven months and seventeen days. During which time God gave them a most wonderful law, which, after fifteen hundred years, Paul tells us, that it was "The first covenant." (Heb. 9: 18-22.) Leaving Sinai we journey along 480 years, which brings us to the days of Solomon, and the time when he said that there was "No new thing under the sun." This was 2,993 years after the creation of Adam, and it may be that up to that time (but we doubt it) that no new thing had ever happened under the sun. Not even in the realm of Bro. Solomon's domain, but from then on new things began to happen right along. Leaving Solomon's day we drop down 346 years, to the days of Jeremiah, and there we learn (Jer. 31: 31-34) that some time in the future the world was going to have a something which would be called "a new covenant." Traveling along for 700 years,

we pass the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Then, in Heb. 10: 19, 20, the writer tells us, that when Jesus was here on earth he dedicated "a new and living way." Turning to Heb. 8: 6-13; 9: 15, we learn that this "new and living way" is the "new covenant," foretold in Jer. 31: 31-34. Now, when we begin to study the life of Jesus, and the things contained in this "new covenant," we find that it is full of new things. The conception and birth of Christ was an entirely new thing. Never before, or since, has there been a conception and birth like unto His. Therefore, I am fully persuaded that it would be as much of a new thing to Bro. Solomon as it was, and is to any one else. Also, that it is very probable that if he were here now, with all his super-wisdom, that he would be stumbling and doubting the Bible account of Christ's conception and birth, as many worldly wise are doing. Then the character of Christ's work was another new thing. He came to conquer the world through enlightenment and love. Solomon's kind of wisdom would say, No, no, you can't do that. If you want to conquer the world you will have to take the sword and hack them into submission. Christ's way to subdue man was a new thing under the sun, never thought of before. Therefore Bro. Solomon was mistaken.

Again, the manner of His teaching was altogether new. He began by speaking as one having authority and taught things never heard before from any one. For example we read, "I say unto you, love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you," and again, "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them." Nothing like this had even been heard since the birth of the world. No wonder that unbelievers marvelled. (Mark 1: 27.) Then, too, during the three and a half years of his public ministry, he revolutionized the teachings and doctrines of 4000 years. He raised aloft the torch of liberty and planted in the hearts of men new hopes, holy aspirations and beautiful ideals, and created a new system of religion which henceforth, would control the lives and destiny of millions of people. All of this was entirely new. Nothing like it had ever entered the mind of man.

After laying the foundation of this new covenant, he gave Himself a ransom for the whole world. Dying on the cross, He gave His own blood to dedicate this "new and living way," that in it we might be saved. Suffering Himself to be buried, He fought a single-handed battle against the devil and all the powers of hell. He conquered, He triumphed over sin, hell and the grave and arose therefrom, bringing light and salvation to a lost and ruined world. This was another new thing under the sun.

Turning to Matt. 2: 28-30, we hear Jesus extending a world-wide and age-lasting invitation to all the sin-ladened and soul-weary pilgrims of earth to come to Him and rest, offering them rest here and now, and rest in the great beyond. Nothing like this had ever been heard in Solomon's day.

When any one accepts this invitation they have to come to Christ and enter the new covenant by a new birth. (John 3: 3.) Without this new birth, Jesus says, you can not enter the kingdom of God.

In being born anew, we are buried in baptism and raised from the grave of water to walk in a new life. (Rom. 6: 4.) When we have thus obeyed God, he adds us to His church, adopts us into His family and we become sons and daughters of God Almighty (II Cor. 6: 16-18), and thereby pass into a new relationship, which does away with all old things, and we become new creatures, as explained by Paul in II Cor. 5: 17. As God's sons and daughters we wear a new name—the name "Christian"—a name never heard in Solomon's day, but now a name of Divine origin and one in which all people may glorify God (I Peter 4: 15, 16), a name pleasing unto God and sacred to every loyal disciple's heart.

Now, having come into this new covenant by the new birth, and having entered upon this "new and living way," we are now ready to begin the walk of the new life. Turning to Col. 3: 1-14, we find that we have a new occupation, namely, transforming our lives out of the old and into the new. This we do by following the footsteps of Jesus and imitating His life as we journey towards the city of gold.

Then, while here on earth we abide; we have a new food to eat—"The Lord's Supper." Once each week, on the Lord's day, we gather around the sacred board and partake of the loaf, and the fruit of the vine, in memory of Jesus, who did so much for us. But this is a new institution, a new privilege, a new and sacred pleasure that Solomon never had or heard of.

As we tarry among the lengthening shadows, we are reminded that this life is transient, and that we ourselves are but fleeting shadows of a day. The Psalmist says: "The days of our years are threescore and ten. Or even by reason of strength fourscore years. Yet is their pride but labor and sorrow, for it is soon gone and we fly away." Being, therefore, about the place to which we will "fly" we turn to John 14: 1-3, and there we learn of new mansions prepared by Jesus, in the home of our Father, into which all the faithful will pass when this fitful dream is over. Solomon built a magnificent temple in which to worship God, and a wonderful mansion in which to live. But nothing ever conceived or constructed by Solomon compares in any way to the mansions prepared by Jesus. Besides that, the mansions prepared by Jesus are newer than any Solomon ever built.

We now turn to Rev. 5: 9-12, and there learn that in the sweet afterwhile all the redeemed of all nations, climes and times, will be gathered into the new mansions by Jesus prepared, and there in one great, grand and mighty chorus, join in singing a new song to the Lamb of God through all eternity. But every member of that choir will be one who has passed through the new birth, who have traveled the "new and living way," who wore the new name, who followed the new occupation, who ate of the new food, and who was redeemed by the blood of the new covenant.

Beloved, are you among this number? Are you prepared to join this heavenly company, and mingle your voice in angel melody in the new songs of the Holy City? If not, won't you get ready, now—now?

THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH

By Will J. Cullum

We are assembled here this evening for the purpose of a further study of the Word of God and, of course, we appreciate very much the presence of all who constitute this audience. Your continued presence but bespeaks your interest in the study of the Word of the Living God, and as we are here assembled I trust that the subject to which we shall devote our time will be sufficiently plain that all may be benefited by this study.

The subject under consideration this evening is the church. Whether or not it is necessary for all responsible beings to be members of the church and live a faithful Christian life in order to get to heaven at last.

Now, I am conscious, my friends, of the fact that religious teachers of times past have taught people that it is unnecessary to be in the church in order to be saved. Such people tell us that it makes no difference whether you are a member of the church or not, that you can be saved out of the church as well as in it, and if indeed you are to become a member of the church, that it matters not what church you are in, that you may be saved in one church just as well as in another. I verily believe that this doctrine or theory is most God dishonoring and its effect soul destroying. I believe it to be just as far from the truth as midnight darkness is from noonday sunlight. So we shall now enter into the study of that part of the parable that the Saviour gave in the 20th chapter of Matthew, which will give us some light on the subject, and see if we can not learn just when and where we are promised salvation.

The Saviour always taught in parables, using some natural object with which his hearers were acquainted, to teach them the wonderful spiritual lesson he had in store for them. Now, upon this occasion the Saviour used the parable of the householder who had a vineyard and who

went out to hire laborers for the purpose of working for him in his vineyard. In the 20th chapter of Matthew, beginning with the third verse, He says, "He went out the third, sixth, ninth and eleventh hours and hired laborers and sent them into his vineyard to work for him, and at the close of the day he instructed his steward to call these laborers and pay them their wages. Those who went in early in the morning received no more than those entering at the third, sixth, ninth or eleventh hours." Now, we are told that this case is evidence of the fact of salvation in answer to prayer in the passing from the stage of action by an individual that has not lived a day in the service of God. We want to study this parable this evening, my friends, and I believe that we shall be able to learn that it is absolutely necessary that every responsible being (and all others will be saved anyway), become a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ and worship and serve Him here if they are ever permitted to pass through the pearly gates into the city of our God.

In order that we may understand and get the lesson that the Saviour intended in this parable, it is very necessary that we observe the instructions of the Apostle Paul in II Timothy 2: 15, where he says, "Study to show thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." In the study of the Bible there are two or three things always to be observed. We must first notice the speaker as to his right or authority in speaking. We must then notice the subject under consideration and the persons or characters to whom spoken. In this parable the Saviour is speaking and He is teaching a lesson pertaining to the kingdom of heaven, whatever that may mean in this connection.

Now, we must understand or get the real meaning of the first expression, *kingdom of heaven,* or we can not grasp the spiritual lesson that the Saviour gave us in the parable. I want to ask each of you to answer within your own minds what you believe that the Saviour means here when He refers to the kingdom of heaven. Does He mean heaven, that place of eternal rest, of joy, peace and

bliss, where there is no pain, sickness or sorrow, no tears to dim the eyes, no sad partings or good-bys? I can not believe He referred to the place of eternal rest. I do not understand, nor have I ever gathered the idea from the study of the Word of God, that heaven is the kind of a place where we labor, but a place of rest, where people rest from their labors and receive the reward which God will give His faithful servants. Now, we see why we can not believe that the kingdom here means heaven, for the vineyard was a place of toil and labor. We further hear people say that it depends altogether on who it is that places the construction on the Scripture as to what it means. Now, that is a mistaken idea. If we will just learn the construction the Lord has placed on the Scripture, and accept what He says, we will have the proper construction.

Now, let the Saviour tell us what He means by the kingdom of heaven. You remember while He was here on earth, during the three and one-half years of his personal ministry, that he performed many miracles, and did many wonders and signs in the presence of the people to convince them that He was the Son of God. John says, "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and that believing you might have life through his name." We learn that the purpose of the miracles, wonders and signs of the Saviour was to convince the people of His Sonship. In Matthew 16: 13 He asked the disciples what the people thought of Him. The apostles had been out all over the country and had heard many different opinions and expressions as to whom the Saviour was, and the record says that He asked them the question, "But whom do you say that I am, or what do you say about it?" Simon answered and said, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." Others had said John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

Now I just want to say this, kind friends, that there were five opinions expressed concerning the Saviour as to who He was. All of these opinions can not be correct, and if one is true, whichever it may be, that as a fact forever sets aside all of the others. Now, there are five

opinions concerning Him and we find that these differences of opinions were settled by God of heaven, and all religious differences that have ever existed, that exist now, or that ever will exist can be settled by Him. How was that question settled upon that occasion? When they had given the many different opinions concerning Him, and Peter had said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," the Saviour said to him, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven." God settled that question and, my friends, when God settled the question or showed that He was the Son of the Living God by revealing it to Peter, that forever set aside the idea of those that thought He was John the Baptist or some one else. God settled that question and God can settle every question now if we will only go to His Word and listen to what He says. Words are signs of ideas and we only know the ideas of a person or character on any matter as they have expressed themselves. When Peter had confessed that He was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, the Lord said, "Upon this rock I will build my church." Now, bear in mind that He is talking now of building His church, and concluded by saying, "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, which is the church, and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Now, we see that the Saviour is speaking of heaven, and the kingdom of heaven, too. The kingdom of heaven is to be here on earth, which is the church, and whatever is made binding by Peter on earth in the kingdom, the church, is to be bound in heaven. Here the Saviour used the words kingdom and church synonymously.

Now, I believe that we are prepared for the lesson in the parable of the vineyard. You observe, my friends, that in this parable the Saviour used just one householder and one vineyard to teach the lesson that He taught in reference to the kingdom or church. Why do you suppose that He did not say the *kingdoms* of heaven, or like unto *householders* who went out to hire laborers to work in their *vineyards?* Why do you suppose He did not use more than one householder and more than

one vineyard to teach the lesson that he taught? Well, I believe it is easy to understand this matter. When Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church," He did not say "my churches," but "my church," in the singular number. How many Lords do we have spoken of in the Bible? Who bought or purchased the church, as stated in Acts 20: 28? We see that there is only one Lord, and this one Lord says "Upon this rock I will build my church." The question arises, did He build His church? In the 20th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, verse 28, the elders are instructed "To take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock, and to feed the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

Now, the next question that arises is how many churches did the Lord establish? In order to understand this, it is necessary that we arrive at the real meaning of the word church. In Eph. 1: 19-23 we have this: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places for above all rule, and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and he put all things in subjection under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." Now, we find the church referred to as the body of Christ. Again we read, in Col. 1: 17, 18, this language: "And he is before all things and by him all things consist and he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." Here we see that the body is called the church. In Eph. 1: 22 the church is called the body. If we can find by a further reading of the Word of God how many bodies Christ has, then we can find out how many churches He built. In Eph. 4: 4, there is one body. Now, from this reading we have no trouble in understanding that there is unquestionably just one body. We do not talk about worshiping different Gods. We never hear people speak of different Jesus Christs, or different

Holy Spirits. Then why do we talk about different churches? In the same book, in the same chapter, and in almost the same verse, the apostle that tells us there is one God, says there is one body, and that body is the church. The Saviour could not use more than one householder and more than one vineyard to teach the lesson that he taught concerning the church, over which He is the head, seeing that there is only one Lord, and one body, which is His church.

We have just one Lord, and that one householder represents, or is a type of the one Lord. This one Lord established one church, and only one, and since He selected the householder with one vineyard, and only one with which to teach the lesson concerning Himself and the church, there are some things connected with the parable that we wish to study, and that is when this man went to the market place to hire these laborers they went to work in, not on the outside, but in *His* vineyard, and those only who were in the vineyard had any promise of a reward at the close of the day. That being true, what lesson do we get from this? The householder represents the Lord and the vineyard represents the church. The laborers represent the members of the church. Says some one, why do you think the householder called these laborers to go into *his* vineyard and work for him? He did this in order that they might go in *his* vineyard, and not in some other man's vineyard, or the vineyard of their choice. But they were to go into his vineyard and work for him, and upon that condition only were they to receive any pay. Now, what do we learn from that? The Son of God shed His precious blood and bought the church, of which He is the head, and which in Eph. 3: 15 is spoken of as the family of God, and we must be in the church, the family of God, before we have any promise of a reward. The Saviour calls people who are old enough to understand the proposition He has made to them. He has called them to enter into His vineyard, the church, His body, the family of God. Another point we want to notice here is that every one that was working in that vineyard was old enough to understand the proposition that the householder made of a penny a day for their

service. Each one considered the proposition, investigated the matter and of his own volition entered into the householder's service, in his vineyard to work for him. The thought that we get from that is, that all beings that become members of the church must be old enough to hear the proposition, or terms of the Gospel as given by the Saviour through His inspired apostles in the world-wide commission, and they must be sufficiently intelligent to consider and thoroughly weigh the proposition, and of his or her own will and accord, enter into the Master's service, obey the Gospel and become a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. You will note again that they were to labor for him. This man did not hire these laborers to idle away their time and to find fault with the rest of the workers, but he requested them to labor. Then since God has called all responsible beings to accept His proposition and enter into His service in the church to work for Him, He has no place for lazy people. God had no need, my friends, of idlers in the church. The person who becomes a member of the church with the idea in his or her mind that they have nothing to do, they are deluded and will be lost at last if indeed they fail to awake to their responsibilities and get busy.

Now, what do you think would have been the result had this householder gone to that market place in search for men and had said to them, "I want you to go and work for me today," and after talking to them they had agreed they would work for him and he expected them to go, but after he was gone one of these men would say to the others, "I think everybody should work in some vineyard, but it makes no difference in what vineyard you work, just so you are in some vineyard. Furthermore, I feel that I should work in the vineyard that my father and mother worked in, and if I should go and work for this man I would be saying that my father and mother worked in the wrong vineyard, and I can not afford to do that," and he would turn and go away. At the close of the day he would go around with his hand out, expecting this householder to pay him. He did not work in his vineyard and he would not be under any obligation to pay him. Thus his labor has been in vain.

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Now, let us make the application: When you go to people with the Word of the Lord and try to teach them that it is absolutely necessary to be a member of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that there is salvation in none other, they will ask you, "Do you mean to say there is salvation only in the church?" Now, we have learned that the body is the church, and the church is the body, and we have learned also that there is one body. Where is salvation? Is it in the body or out of it? In Eph. 5: 23, we read that "Christ is the Saviour of the body." Then my friends, if He is the Saviour of the body, where can salvation be found? It can be found only in the body, which is the church, or kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, that was bought with His own precious blood; and so I insist that all people who are responsible to God can be saved only in the body, which is the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, that is not your church or mine. Neither is it your denomination, or any other man's denomination. All denominations together are not the church, neither is the church a denomination. Friends, the church that we are talking about, as revealed in the Word of the Lord, is heaven born, and blood bought and cost the life's blood of the Son of the Living God. But you will say that I admit that people can be saved in the church, but does the Bible say that we can not be saved anywhere else? Let us read again that salvation is to be had only in the church, and to be in the church is to be in the body, and all that are saved are in the body. Now, listen to Acts 4: 11, 12: "This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders which was made the head of the corner and in none other is there salvation, for neither is there any other name under heaven that is given among men wherein we must be saved." Now, from this reading we learn that only in Christ is there salvation and that there is no other name given under heaven among men by which we can be saved.

We come now to the eleventh-hour man. You recall that he was paid the same amount as those who went in earlier in the day. We are sometimes told that in this we have an example of salvation at death without being a member of the Church of Christ. But we believe that

there is nothing in this case to bear out this theory. You will observe that this eleventh-hour man was in the vineyard at the close of the day, and had gone in at the first opportunity, and worked as much as he could. Hence we see that this case could only fit the man who had no opportunity to know his duty until late in life, and then obeys the Gospel and gets into the kingdom or church, and labors for the Master during his remaining days.

WHY WE SING IN THE WORSHIP AND DO NOT PLAY

WHY WE SING IN THE WORSHIP AND DO NOT PLAY

By L. S. White

The Churches of Christ are composed of a large number of intelligent and consecrated men and women. New people are being added to them daily. These churches sing in all the services, but do not have instrumental music at any time. Why is this? Is it to satisfy some peculiar notion? Or does the Bible teach us to thus worship God in song? In different parts of the country hundreds of thousands of Christians sing in the public assemblies of the saints, but do not use instrumental music. Is there a reason for it to be done this way? And is that reason a Scriptural one? Several years ago, I saw the division and strife in some of the churches over the question of instrumental music. I determined to study the Bible very carefully on this question for the purpose, first, of learning the truth; and second, to glorify God in living up to this truth and teaching it to others. It has been my pleasure to speak on this question at many places in different states, and wherever I go, the people seem deeply interested in this live question. I call it a "live question" because it is a Scriptural question, and all Scriptural questions are "live questions." As nearly as possible, let us lay aside every idea we ever had on this subject, and come to the word of the Lord with a full purpose of learning the truth, for "The truth shall make you free" (John 8: 32).

The Lord took Moses on the mountain, and kept him for some time, giving him full instructions how to build the Tabernacle. When he came down, and began to build, God said to him: "See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount" (Heb. 8: 5). For a fine synopsis of the Tabernacle service, read Heb. 9: 1-12. God gave Moses the "pattern," and instructed him to build by it. We all know the use

and need of a pattern. And a pattern will be of no benefit unless followed. An architect gets out a plan for a house, but that plan will be of no benefit unless followed in the building of the house. And so it is in the religious realm. Our God has given us the plan, and we must follow His plan. In this sermon, we will measure the church by God's plan, the word of the Lord; but will certainly not measure the word of the Lord by the church. "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. . . . For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure" (II Cor. 10: 12-14).

THE TABERNACLE A TYPE OF THE CHURCH

By all known to me, it is conceded that the Tabernacle is the type of the church. The Tabernacle and all its furnishings are described in the latter part of the book of Exodus. It had only one door of entrance; and in it there were two apartments. In these apartments there were certain pieces of furniture. The first apartment was called the "Holy Place," and it represented the church. The second apartment was called "The Most Holy Place," or the "Holy of Holies," and was a type of heaven. No one could enter the Tabernacle except the priests. At the door of the Tabernacle was placed the laver. It contained water. After the priest had been properly prepared, he was brought to the laver, and as the crowning act, was bathed in this water, and then admitted into the Tabernacle, where he could perform the service of God. This act represents our being baptized. The Lord would not permit those people to put the laver inside the Tabernacle, bring the priest into the Tabernacle, and then bathe him; neither will He permit us to change either the action or design of baptism, and make Christians of people, and then baptize them; but it must stay where the Lord has placed it. On the same principle, God would not permit those people to remove any piece of furniture out of the holy place into the most holy place; neither would He permit them to remove any furni-

ture out of the most holy place into the holy place. So, because a thing is done in the church by the direction of the Bible, is no reason that it will be done in heaven; and because we read that certain things are done in heaven is no reason why we should do them in the church. Neither should a thing be done as worship to God because it is permissible in the home. For example: Bacon and beans are good on the table in a private home, but are not to be used on the Lord's table in the worship of God. If we do things in the church because they are done in heaven, then we will have a priest, a golden altar, burn incense on that golden altar, and do other things the Lord has not authorized us to do. And here I lay down some principles to govern us in the study of this important question.

1. The Word of the Lord Our Pattern

"All Scripture is given by inspiration, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3: 16, 17). If instrumental music in the worship is a good work, certainly the word of the Lord will furnish us the necessary instruction, as it "thoroughly furnishes us unto all good works."

2. Should Have a Reason for All We Do

"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (I Peter 3: 15). "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4: 11). "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1: 8).

3. We Must Walk by Faith

"For we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Cor. 5: 7). Before a thing can be done by faith, God must give the instruction for the doing of it. There is only one kind of faith that does any good. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5: 6).

4. God Has the Right to Restrict the Membership of His Church, and Say Who Shall Enter It

In harmony with this principle, the Lord stands at the door of His church, and by His word, says who shall enter, and how they shall enter. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5: 9). In II Thess. 1: 7-10, we learn that all who do not obey the Gospel will be lost.

5. God Has Placed Restrictions Around the Worship as Binding as Entrance Into the Church

This is the real battle-ground of the instrumental music question. For if God has placed no restrictions around the worship, then people can use instrumental music or anything else they please; but if He has placed restrictions around the worship, and He has, then we can not use instrumental music in the worship. I give you some examples of restrictions. In ancient times, God designated the tribe of Levi should not have any inheritance in the land of Canaan; and that they should be supported by their brethren. God also designated that the Levites should do a special work of the Lord that others should not do; and it was specially true that only the descendants of Aaron should do the work of the priests. In Numbers, 16th chapter, we learn where Korah, Dathan and Abiram took this authority to themselves, and did some of the work of the priests; and because of this, the Lord parted the ground from under them, and they were swallowed up, and also their followers were destroyed. And in Lev. 10: 1, 2, we learn where Nadab and Abihu, real priests, offered a sacrifice in a different way from what the Lord had instructed them, and were destroyed. God had said the ark was to be removed in a certain way, but David undertook to move the ark in a different way from what the Lord directed; and at least one man lost his life, although David had thirty thousand musicians playing at one time on "all manner of instruments" (II Sam. 6: 1-7). Later, David did as the Lord had directed, and removed the ark to the right place. In Numbers 20: 7-12, God told Moses to "Speak" to the

rock, and bring forth water, but Moses "*Smote*" the rock. The water gushed out, and we might decide it made no difference, just so he got results. But God would not permit Moses to enter the promised land because he did differently from what the Lord told him. In fact, the Bible tells us how to worship God, and I am pleading that we worship God as He teaches us. "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4: 24). To worship in spirit, is to be honest, sincere, fervent and devoted. This is all good, but not enough, if we stop here; for it takes two things to make the worship acceptable to God, "*spirit*" and "*truth.*" But what is the truth? "The word is truth" (John 17:17).

But when was *singing* put into Christian worship? It was put there by Jesus Christ when He instituted the Lord's Supper. "And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of olives" (Matt. 26: 30). It would have been just as easy to say they "played," but the Bible says they "sung."

SOME PROPHECIES ON SINGING AND THEIR FULFILLMENT

"Therefore will I give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen, and sing praises unto thy name" (Psa. 18: 49). That this is a prophecy of the way Christians are to sing, the following Scripture shows: "And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, for this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name" (Rom. 15: 9). It would have been just as easy to prophesy of "playing" as of "singing," but the Lord said "*sing,*" and we better do what He said do. In another prophecy, we read: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth. Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing" (Isa. 52: 7, 8). By reading Rom. 10: 15, we see this is a prophecy concerning New Testament times, and is now fulfilled by "lifting up the voice"; and there is no stretch of the imagination by which we can make "*voice*" mean a

mechanical instrument of music. And the following prophecy is very significant: "I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee" (Psa. 22:22). David said he would praise God "in the midst of the congregation." How was this to be done? The Bible tells us: "Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Heb. 2:12). Thus we see God foretold that "in the midst of the church we are to *sing* praise unto him." It would have been so easy for the Lord to say "*play*," but He said "*sing*," and we should be delighted to do what the Lord says.

THEY SANG: AND WE ARE TO SING

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God" (Acts 16: 25). It would have been so easy to say "played," but the Bible says they "sang." Better be on the safe side. In regulating Christian worship, Paul said: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (I Cor. 14: 15). In further regulating Christian worship, he says: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5: 19). "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3: 16). Much is being said about the word "Psallo," as used in these and other Scriptures, from which we have our English words "sing," "singing," "making melody" and "sing praises." Our God tells us what the *instrument* is on which we are to "make melody," and that instrument is the *"heart"*; and when God declares that the instrument is the heart, it is a very dangerous thing to say it is a mechanical instrument. Just as when our Saviour said: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," He used the word "baptizo," which means to "dip, plunge, submerge, immerse, overwhelm." But the element to be used does not inhere in the word. So the good Lord tells us what element to use, and that is

water; and we must not use any other element in baptizing. The Lord also settles the matter forever when he tells us the instrument on which we are to "pluck, twitch, twang, vibrate, make melody," is the *heart*. And when God says: "Making melody in your heart," I will never step in front of the Lord and say to the people to make the melody on a mechanical instrument. But we are told that we can not "sing psalms" without using instrumental music as an accompaniment. Let the Bible inform us: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms" (Jas. 5:13). When God says "sing psalms," I insist that it does not mean "play psalms." And here I might say that Job teaches a wonderfully strong lesson on the use of instrumental music, and that was at least fifteen hundred years before Christ: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? Their seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes. Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them. . . . They send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (Job 21: 7-14).

"BUT WHAT ABOUT DAVID?"

David lived before Christ, and we are to follow Christ; and Christ never used instrumental music in any service He was in; and neither did He ever authorize any one else to use it. But many of those who use instrumental music in the worship claim that Christ entered into the Temple and took part in the affairs connected therewith, among other things, instrumental music, and did not say one word against these things. This is held up as one of the strongest arguments (?) in favor of instrumental music in the worship. But let us see the facts in the case. The temple built by King Solomon was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzer, 586 B. C. About 520 B. C., Zerubbabel returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the Temple. About twenty years before Christ was born into

the world, Herod the Great tore down the Temple and built a new one; and that was the one in use during the days of Christ on earth: and I deny that the Temple built by Herod the Great ever had a musical instrument in it. This display of words about Christ and the apostles being accustomed to instrumental music in the Temple is not supported by either the Bible or history. Not one strain of instrumental music in the Temple was ever heard by either Christ or the apostles. And God says: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion. . . . That chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music like David" (Amos. 6: 1-5). "I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols" (Amos 5: 21-23). When God orders people to take away the noise of their songs when accompanied by the viol (instrumental music), I will never ask the people to use instrumental music in the worship. And as God has pronounced a woe on those who "chant to the sound of the viol," I will never step in front of the Lord, and tell the people it is all right to have instrumental music in the worship. Webster says: "*Chant,* To utter with a melodious voice; to sing." This settles the matter with me. I will not "chant"—sing in connection with instrumental music—since God Almighty has placed a woe on those who do it.

WHEN WAS INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC BROUGHT INTO CHURCH SERVICE?

The first church in the world to have an organ was the Catholic Church, and it did not come into the Catholic Church till far in the seventh century. The first time the Christian Church ever used an organ was in St. Louis, Mo., in 1869; and this was 1836 years after the church was established on earth. The Catholics borrowed instrumental music largely from the heathens, and the denominations have borrowed it from the Catholics. Adam Clark, one of the greatest commentators the world has produced, and certainly the greatest the Methodist

Church has produced, in commenting on Amos 6: 5, among other things, said: "I further believe that the use of such instruments of music, in the Christian Church, is *without* the *sanction,* and *against* the *will* of God; that they are subversive of the spirit of true devotion; and that they are sinful. If there was a *woe to them* who *invented* instruments of music, as did David, under the law, is there *no woe, no curse,* to them who invent them, and introduce them into the worship of God in the Christian Church? I am an old man, and an old minister; and I here declare that I never knew them productive of any good in the worship of God; and have had reason to believe they were productive of much evil. Music, *as a science,* I esteem and admire; but instruments of music *in the house of God* I abominate and abhor. This is the abuse of music."

BRIEF HISTORY OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

"Pope Vitalianus, in 658, introduced the organ into the Roman churches to accompany the singers. Leo II, in 682, reformed the singing of the psalms and hymns, accommodating the intonation of them to the manner in which they are sung at the present day." London Encyclopedia, Vol. 15, page 280, article Music. "In the Greek Church the organ never came into use." Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, Vol. 2, page 1702. I remark here that this is the Greek Catholic Church, and being composed of Greeks who know the Greek language, and consequently the meaning of the word "Psallo," has never permitted the use of instrumental music in their worship. This is indeed significant. John Calvin, founder of the Presbyterian Church, says: "Musical instruments in celebrating the praising of God would be no more suitable than the burning of incense, the lighting of lamps, and the restoration of the other shadows of the law. The Papists, therefore, have foolishly borrowed this, as well as many other things, from the Jews. Men who are fond of outward pomp may delight in that noise, but the simplicity which God recommends to us by the apostles is far more pleasing to Him. Paul allows us to bless God in the public assembly of the saints, only in a known tongue. (I Cor. 14: 16). . . . What shall we then say of

chanting, which fills the ears with nothing but an empty sound." Com. on Ps. XXXIII. Alexander Campbell said: "To those who have no real devotion or spirituality in them, and whose animal nature fags under the oppression of church service, I think that instrumental music would be not only a desideratum, but an essential prerequisite to fire up their souls to even animal devotion. But I presume to all spiritually-minded Christians, such aids would be as a cowbell in a concert."

CONCLUSION

On account of the introduction of instrumental music into Christian worship, together with the other things that invariably follow it, a once united and happy brotherhood has been torn asunder. Strife, division, and tears have followed in its wake. The cause of Christ has been weakened. In many cases, instrumental music has been brought into the worship over the pleadings and prayers of faithful and godly men and women; and the church torn to pieces. Even those who use instrumental music in the worship agree that singing is right, and they can acceptably worship God without it. Then, why not leave it out and have unity? Why think more of instrumental music than the fellowship of a large body of consecrated men and women? Many good people can not worship where it is used. I have not helped to sing a song for the past twenty years where instrumental music was used. Since learning what the Bible teaches on this question, I can not conscientiously sing where there is instrumental music. The Church of Christ got along in peace and harmony for over eighteen hundred years without instrumental music, and could do so today. I plead with the people who are thus causing division—dividing the body of Christ—to lay aside the unscriptural practice, come back to the word of the Lord, and let us have unity again! And here, I will say that I do not believe there has been an organ put into any church for the purpose of pleasing the Lord, but to please the people. I want the Lord satisfied. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22: 14).

CONSECRATION

CONSECRATION

By H. M. Evans

Our subject this morning is Consecration. As this subject is much misunderstood in the religious world, it will be our aim to endeavor to throw some light upon the question.

Consecration means to "fill the hand." The word is usually used in a religious sense, and the individual who is truly consecrated to the service of his, or her Master, has the "hands full," so to speak; so intensely and devotedly in earnest and busily engaged with the work of saving his own soul and that of others that he, or she has no time to spend in selfish interests, no time to waste in amassing and hording wealth, or in the so-called enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Such a one is truly consecrated—has the "hands full"—of the work of the Lord. In fact people call such a one eccentric—off the center—a fanatic, and, by the world, is said to be losing all the real pleasure and enjoyment there is in life and sacrificing the real riches and pleasures for something unseen and visionary.

But their ideas of values are mistaken ones. It is the one who has his "hands full" of the fast fleeting wealth and pleasures of this life, who is eccentric—off the center; he is placing his hope on the foundationless and uncertain, while the consecrated disciple of the Lord looks at and works for the unseen and eternal things, the wealth and pleasures of which never end. True consecration seldom matures in the great majority of professed Christians, with them like the rich young man the price to pay for the unseen and eternal things is too great; his great earthly possessions so "filled his hands" that he had neither time, nor inclination, to spend his great earthly possessions upon those unseen and eternal things that never fade away.

Jesus has said that "Ye can not serve God and Mammon." Many people try to divide their heart between

these two masters, but while the world is gained the soul is lost.

In the busy world of today every steamship that crosses the ocean, every train upon the rails, and every manufacturing plant must be working at its full capacity or it is operating at a loss to its owners. Every ship must carry a full cargo and every freight train must carry a full load with the least possible overhead expense; every manufacturing plant must turn out its daily quota of products in order to make them paying investments. The church is no exception to this rule. It is the Lord's soul-saving institution. He has invested His own life's blood in it. He promises eternal life to the individual who takes shares with Him in this wonderfully benevolent enterprise and the dividends are sure. He is calling earnestly and loudly for shareholders. He wants your heart, your time, your talent and your money. He wants you to work at your full capacity. He wants to keep this heavenly company turning out its daily quota of saved souls, and every congregation that is not working at its full capacity is operating at a direct loss to its Head. Every member of this company who is not interested in home and foreign missions, orphan homes, publishing houses of Gospel literature, and every phase of the Lord's work, has no promise of sharing the blessings of the Great Head of this sacred institution when its dividends are declared. Are you working at full capacity, my brother? Are you really consecrated—your "hands filled" with the great and unselfish work of your Lord's loving heart? "Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatever a man soweth that shall he also reap."

At the great naval battle of Trafalgar, Lord Nelson, the commander of the British flagship, told his men that "Britain expected every man to do his duty." It is on the battle fleet of Zion's high seas that her Commander has issued orders to be "faithful unto death," and has promised the victor a "crown of life" at the surrender of the enemy.

Idlers and shirkers are only a dead weight to the church, and like a dead locomotive, are only pulled into the repair shop by an active, willing but struggling engine.

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PLEASE RETURN

Like the parasite they are trying to live upon the life blood of the willing worker, and do the Lord's work by proxy, but the time is coming to such people when their reward will have to be by proxy too.

The consecration of the Levitical priesthood was only a type of the Christian priesthood's consecration. Read Leviticus, eighth and ninth chapters. Aaron and his sons were brought to the door of the tabernacle; their bodies were washed, clothed and anointed; their ears, thumbs and great toes were anointed with the blood of the ram of their consecration and were thus consecrated; their ears listening to heaven's message, their hands dedicated to the Lord's work and their feet to walking continually in the path of duty. Their "hands were filled with the offerings to Jehovah and were waved heavenward, after which they remained at the door of the tabernacle for seven days, thus completing the consecration ceremonies.

Paul, in Rom. 15: 4, tells us that these things were "written for our learning," and Peter says that Christians are "a kingdom of priests." It remains for the Christian to apply these lessons to his own heart in his consecration to the Lord's service. The writer of the Hebrew epistle says that he who would become a priest must be "called of God, as was Aaron," thus Paul applies the lesson in the type to the call of the priest in the Gospel dispensation. Jesus says, "I am the Door." It is to this Door that every candidate for the Christian priesthood is called. Their bodies must be washed (John 3: 5; Acts 22: 16; Heb. 10: 22); they must "put off the old man" and robe themselves in the righteousness of Christ (Col. 3: 9, 10; Rom. 13: 14); they must be anointed with the Holy Spirit (I John 2: 20-27). Their ears, hands and feet, and their entire being, must be thus dedicated to the work of the Lord by the blood of that Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world; they are required to "fill their hands" with the work He has allotted to them—"offer their bodies as living sacrifices (Rom. 12: 1), and their all, the fruit of the lips and good works as sacrifices well pleasing to God. (Heb. 13: 15, 16.)

Thus consecrated to the priesthood, the Christian priest, with his "hands filled" with his Lord's business, begins his duties. The path of duty up Zion's hill is by no means an easy climb. Many an obstruction will be placed in his way by Satan the great enemy of his soul. Discouragements and disappointments will be many as he presses onward and upward towards the palace of his King. Enemies upon every hand will oppose his advance to where the crown of life awaits his arrival in the throne room of heaven's Sovereign.

The stage of true consecration can only be reached by the disciple of Christ by maintaining a complete and continual connection with his Lord. "Abide in me and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me," says Jesus. True consecration is the result of "partaking of the Divine nature." The "Divine husbandman" demands that every branch of the True Vine must "bear fruit" or be "taken away," and every fruit bearing branch must be "cleansed" in order to bring forth "more fruit;" it must work at full capacity. A few straggling grapes scattered through the branches will not satisfy the all-seeing eye of the Divine Husbandman. In order for the branch to bear fruit at all it must "Abide in the Vine," from whence comes all its nourishment. Fruit-bearing is the overplus of life; neither vine, or branch is weakened by a rich, heavy crop of fruit; it is the strong, healthy branch that bears its large clusters of lucious fruit without any loss to its own life or vitality. Yes, it is the unhealthy branch, the lifeless branch, that is the one that is taken away.

In the Spiritual vineyard it is the branch that "abides not" in the vine that ceases to bear fruit and cuts itself off, or takes itself away from the vine; it has ceased to bear fruit and is reserved for the flames as a useless appendage to an otherwise vigorous and thrifty vine.

A miserly neighbor of the writer, in a conversation on thrift, said that he had to work, that every horse, cow, sheep or pig, and every foot of land had to work; that his accumulated gold had to work; yes, work at full capacity, or get off the farm. Yes, his horde of gold had

to be invested in the best stocks and bonds and mortgages on the market, and with ample security and sufficient interest to satisfy his greed for the fleeting wealth and pleasures of this life. This man's hands were certainly "full," but nothing of those things that God had filled those hands with were waved heavenward as offerings to Him who had given that niggardly soul so many blessings.

This man made no profession, but there are many professed Christians who are branches of this Satanic false vine. It is easily seen that the Lord gets no share of the fruit borne by this vine or its branches. A church made up of such branches, and who have but a pretended or hypocritical connection with the True Vine, are only living in that proverbial "fool's paradise" that we hear so much about and whose end will be in that lake which burns with fire and brimstone. They bear no fruit.

Jehovah has willed that none should perish, but that all should turn to Him and live. Why should man continue in his stubborn rebellion in face of all the Lord's warnings of danger; His threats of punishment for disobedience and the promises of eternal life and happiness for those who are co-workers with Him and are laying up treasures in that land of things unseen. Will you not join with the faithful and sing with them:

The consecrated cross I'll bear,
Till death shall set me free,
And then go home a crown to wear,
For there's a crown for me.

There are many in the church today whose eyes the god of this world has blinded; they are so taken up with the accumulation of sordid gain and the pleasures of a carnal world that Mammon has taken all they have, and home and foreign missions go begging; the spread of the Gospel of a once crucified but now risen and exalted Redeemer makes no appeal to them. A week's hard work for Mammon takes them to bed so tired Saturday night that they rise too late to attend to their duties as a priest on Lord's day. Some manage to get to the house of the Lord half-heartedly, but fall asleep during the service

and only wake up in time to join in the doxology and put their paltry dime or nickel on the Lord's contribution plate.

"Many are called, but few are chosen," says Jesus. Many are consecrated, have had their "hands filled," but have sold their birthright and blessing, like Esau, for a mere "mess of pottage." Many start up the hill to Zion's peak, but few make the successful climb. O my brother, at your consecration ceremonies, as you rise from the baptismal waters try and catch the keynote of heaven's music and keep your whole life in tune with it until you reach the pearly gates; keep your prayer line unbroken between your closet and the great power house above. Be faithful unto death and the crown of life is yours.

In conclusion, I realize that many will read this humble effort when the "lisping, stammering tongue" of the writer is "silent in the grave." The faces of many whom I have never seen, but hope to see in that glorious clime, where trouble, sin, sickness and death never come, where God has promised to dry all tears and where we shall see our great Redeemer and enjoy His companionship, world without end.

THE GREAT SALVATION

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THE GREAT SALVATION

By Emmett G. Creacy

We want to call your attention to the greatest question that has ever confronted mortal man—the question of salvation. In Heb. 2: 3, the question is suggested in these words: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first was spoken by the Lord, and confirmed unto us by them that heard?"

The prophet Jeremiah (10: 23) impresses upon our minds the fact that it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. Then we must look for an infallible guide, which is the Word of God. David tells us that the Word of God is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway.

The Bible is a revelation of three great ages. After the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, God established a system of religion which was of a family nature. This dispensation of divine government, beginning after the fall of man, lasted until God brought the children of Israel from Egypt, a period of approximately twenty-five hundred years, during which time we learn of the removal of Jacob and about seventy-five souls down into the land of Egypt. This company of people became a great body, and because of their persecution by the king of Egypt, God had mercy and compassion upon them, and through Moses delivered them from this bondage.

After their deliverance, and at Mount Sinai, God established another system of religion which was of a national nature, and which lasted until the death of Christ upon the rugged tree, a period of approximately fifteen hundred years.

After the death of Christ God established another system of religion which is of an international nature, which will last until Christ comes again, or till time shall be no more. Actual remission of sins was not promised unto the children of men before Jesus died and shed his

blood (Heb. 9: 22), but God sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Christ. He came as one crying in the wilderness, "Make ye ready the way of the Lord; make His paths straight." The work of John the Baptist was of a restricted nature.

After the death of John the Baptist Jesus began His personal ministry, continuing the work that John had started, selecting certain disciples to go and preach to the lost sheep of the house of Israel; but Jesus was finally crucified, was buried in a borrowed tomb, but after three days He came forth bringing life and immortality to light through the Gospel. All authority in heaven and on earth was given unto Him. Therefore, He gave to His apostles the great commission, in which we find the great salvation spoken.

There are at least three causes of man's salvation. The prime cause is the love and grace of God. We read John 3: 16, and find this statement: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." And again we read the eighth verse of the second chapter of Ephesians, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." For four thousand years the human family was in midnight darkness, alienated and lost in the world, without God, and without hope, but because of the love and grace of God salvation is offered unto man. If we are permitted when this life shall end, and time on earth is no more, to pass into the heaven of bliss, and walk the streets of gold, I am sure we can sing with the spirit and understanding that good old hymn, "By Grace We Are Saved."

While the prime cause of our salvation is the love and grace of God, the meritorious cause is the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. In Heb. 9: 22 we learn that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. Also Romans 5: 9, "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." The human family could not merit salvation. Nothing that we could do, and nothing good that we have done, would merit or "buy" our salvation.

Then, if we are permitted to be numbered with the redeemed around the great white throne it will be *because* Christ's blood was shed for the remission of our sins. The cleansing efficacy is in the blood of Jesus.

We have suggested the prime cause, and the meritorious cause, but there is another cause. The instrumental cause of our salvation is faith: but a very pertinent question—faith in whom, and faith in what? Faith in some system? Faith in some doctrine? Faith in some ecclesiastical arrangement or denominational church? No. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In Romans 5: 1, we read, "Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Christ came to this earth to seek and to save the lost, and our salvation depends upon our faith in Him, the greatest Physician the world has even known, the one and only Physician of the greatest disease—sin.

I want to give a simple illustration in passing, trusting it will help the reader to see and appreciate the truth upon this important question. Suppose I become very ill, and I call our family physician. He finds that I am in a very serious condition. I realize too that my condition is serious. The physician, kind, and gentle, and good, as I firmly believe him to be, assures me that he can cure me and make me well. He prescribes the remedy, and gives full and complete instructions for using the medicine thus prescribed, and then I should say, "Doctor, I believe in you with all my heart. I am trusting in you with all the power of my being. I believe that you are abundantly able to save me, but I see no need in doing what you say, hence, I will not follow your directions and use the medicine you have prescribed." There is no one who would say I had faith in the physician.

Now, let us think seriously. Jesus Christ is the Great Physician. (Luke 5: 31, 32.) He came to earth. He died for us. He prescribed the way to be healed of sin disease. He dedicated to us the new and living way (Heb. 10: 20), and upon the printed pages of the New Testament we find the plain and simple directions given by this great Physician; therefore, in order to be saved we must bow, as it were, at the feet of Christ and say,

"Speak, Lord, and I will hear. Command, Lord, and I will obey. Lead, Lord, and I will follow."

But on the other hand, what if I should say, "Lord, I believe in you and trust in you with all the power of my being. I believe you are abundatly able to save me from sin, but I see no need of doing just what you command." Of course, every one should be able to see that I have no faith in the Lord. Let me suggest that no man was ever blessed on account of his faith until that faith was rendered expressive in some act of obedience, I care not if it be but the putting forth of the hand and touching the border of His garment.

In the great commission given by Christ after His death we find the directions given. What are the terms of pardon? If a man should commit a crime and is summoned to appear before the court, a jury is selected to render the verdict, but before the jury can render a just verdict the witnesses are called; one at a time they testify. After all the witnesses have testified, the jury, having heard the whole truth, can render a just verdict. In like manner, that we may know all the terms of pardon we must hear the testimony of all the witnesses of the "Great Commission." The witnesses regarding the "Great Commission" are Matthew, Mark and Luke.

Witness No. 1 is called. (Matt. 28: 19.) Matthew testifies that Jesus said on the morning of His resurrection, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Witness No. 2 is called. (Mark 16: 15, 16.) Mark testifies that Jesus said to his apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned."

We now call the third witness. (Luke 24: 46, 47.) Luke testifies that Jesus said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Now we have heard their testimony, and what shall

we do? Let us note carefully; first Matthew states "baptism." Should we repudiate the testimony of Mark and Luke, and only accept Matthew's statement? If we did, we would have water baptism the only condition of salvation. No. 2, Mark states, "Gospel, belief, bapism." Matthew did not tell us what to preach, but Mark did, and may I humbly suggest that no preacher has any right to preach anything to the people but the simple Gospel of Christ. Mark also specifies belief and baptism. Jesus Christ said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Why do not all preachers today preach the same as stated by Christ? No. 3, Luke states repentance.

We repeat the question: "What must we do to be saved?" We must accept the testimony of all witnesses. Then we have the whole truth upon the proposition under consideration. Hence, all the witnesses tell us that Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth it, repents of his sins, and is baptized in the name of the sacred Three, is saved from his alien sins, and therefore is a Christian." See John 8: 24, Luke 13: 5 and John 3: 5.

The Apostle Peter (I Peter 4: 16) says, "If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name." The same process that makes one a Christian adds him to the church. What church? The one we read about in the New Testament. One of the easy lessons to be learned from the Word is that the church is the family of God (I Tim. 3: 15, and Eph. 3: 15), and that to become a child of God one must accept and obey the terms of pardon, therefore, becoming a Christian or member of the church. The church revealed in the Bible is not a human institution. It is not a denomination. It is a blood-bought institution, a divine institution, purchased with and by the blood of Jesus Christ. (Acts 20: 28.) Therefore, as a Christian only, a member of the body of Christ, which is the Church of Christ, we should lead and live a faithful Christian life till God, with the finger of His love, closes down our eyes in death, and we have the full assurance that we will be brought gently across the river of death, and permitted to pass through the gates into the wonderful City of God.

But just another thought. Was the thief who died on the cross baptized? I don't know. I don't need to know. The Bible does not say. Our salvation does not depend upon that question. The thief lived and died before Jesus Christ gave the "Great Commission," therefore before His death, burial and resurrection. Baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, as a condition of pardon, was not given until after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. I suggest we study the New Testament, and when we come this side of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ we do not find one single, solitary example of an alien sinner being saved or converted before and without faith upon his part, repentance, or a complete turning away from sin, and being baptized in the name of Christ; no promise from the God of heaven that an alien sinner's sins will be forgiven until he bows in humble submission, and renders complete obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the power of God unto salvation. (Rom. 1: 16.)

Let us not think for one moment that there is any virtue in faith, in and of itself. There is no virtue in repentance, in and of itself. There is no virtue or cleansing efficacy in baptism, in and of itself. The cleansing power, the virtue, the efficacy is in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, but in order that we may reach the blood, that the blood may cleanse us from all of our alien sins, we must submit to heaven's authority, bow in submission thereto, and obey the Gospel of Christ. (II Thess. 1: 7, 8, 9.) Surely this matter is plain.

BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM

BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM

By T. W. Phillips

In this sermon I desire to call attention to the preaching that began at Jerusalem and also watch the results that followed in the wake of these preachers.

I would not have us forgetful of what has been said of the Christ in prophecy, nor of His miraculous life and work. His wonderful lessons. His loyalty to God, and His pity and helpfulness to man. His sermon "On the Mount" was a masterpiece, and He closed it by saying, "Not every one that sayeth, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." He did not at any time *disparage* the value of faith: But He taught that faith is the work of God. (John 6: 29.) In fact, "without faith, it is impossible to please God." (Heb. 11: 6.) To read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews is to read the great "faith chapter" of the Bible. But nowhere in the Bible does God, Christ, prophets or apostles teach that "faith only" ever pleased God, or blessed man. The doctrine of "faith only" is the doctrine of men and devils! "Faith that works by love" is the only faith that ever brought a blessing to man. Every act of acceptable *obedience* to God and His Christ, in any age of the world, is just an expression of faith! Read carefully the great "faith chapter" and see for yourselves, "the things that were done by faith," and you will be forever convinced that faith *expresses itself by doing the things commanded.* "Faith comes by hearing the Word of God" (Rom. 10: 17).

Then let us read carefully the text in Luke 24: 44-48. But before we read it, may I call your attention to the fact that Jesus had already been crucified, buried and resurrected, as we learn from the first verses of this chapter. Now read with me: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that

all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." But let us read the next verse also, "And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be (inspired) endued with power from on high."

Now friends, here are certain important and undeniable facts we must not overlook if we really seek to know the truth! Jesus said (John 8: 32), "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Again He said, "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6: 45). Something different begins in Jerusalem to anything ever before preached to the children of men! Four thousand years have passed by since man was created in Eden. During all of these years, God sent His preachers to the people with a message, but nothing like the one to Begin at Jerusalem (Isa. 2: 2-4), after the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and after His chosen witnesses were endued with power from on high. Patriarchs and prophets had responded faithfully to the call of God, and the divine messages had been delivered. Men had walked by faith, doing God's biddings. For 1500 years Israel had lived under the Law of Moses, which was a "Schoolmaster" to bring them to Christ. (Gal. 3: 24.) Now He has come, and He took *that* "law" out of the way, nailing it to the cross. (Eph. 2: 14-16.) In Matt. 28: 19, we learn that all authority in heaven and earth is given to Jesus: "Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you: And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear him shall be destroyed" (Acts 3: 22, 23). A new order of things now appears. Jerusalem (Acts 1: 4) is the place of beginning. When the chosen witnesses (Luke 24: 49) were endued

with power, was *the time of the "beginning."* This, we find, took place on the first Pentecost after His ascension, and seating at God's right hand in heaven. (Acts 2: 1-33.) All the chosen witnesses are now filled with the Holy Spirit, and Christ has now sent the Spirit to guide them into all truth, and to bring everything to their remembrance that He had said. (John 14: 26.) "He has shed forth this which ye now see and hear" (Acts 2: 33). Now we are at the right place, and we behold the right time, and no question now about the things we are to hear preached in this *wonderful beginning* by these inspired men of God. Regardless of how different the message may be to all former preaching by holy men of God, or how different this preaching may be from what uninspired men may preach today, be it remembered that this is the *beginning* of the *religion and work of grace* by and through our risen Lord, who has all authority in heaven and earth! And be assured "That if I or an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel unto you (God says) let him be accursed" (Gal. 1: 8, 9). The right place, the right time and the right message preached, are three important factors that are as essential in learning the truth, that makes us free from sin, as is the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord! All through the Old Testament, as well as during the personal ministry of our Lord, the index hand points to Jerusalem and Pentecost, and the preaching to be done then and there. Ever after this great *beginning,* the Holy Spirit, by the apostles, points back to Jerusalem and Pentecost. (Acts 11: 15.) The fountain now opened for sin and uncleanness in the house of David flows freely for "whosoever will." And like a bucket of unmixed water, the last drop being just like the first: Even so, the last Gospel sermon ever to be preached on this earth to poor lost sinners, will and must be just like the first. Peter was the spokesman. Jesus had said to him, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." He used the keys by preaching the Gospel of Christ; and as a result 3000 souls obeyed that day. (Acts 2: 41.) Just what he preached that day has been preached every day since then where and when *faithful men preached the Gospel of Christ.* The Gospel

of Christ is the same thing now that it was then; it has not and can not change! Obedience to the Gospel of Christ made children of God out of people then, and nothing more!

Even so, to be more than a child of God, one must believe and do more than is found in the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel of Christ is called "that form of doctrine." It is called "the faith of Christ." It is called "the law of the Spirit of life." And in contrasting it with the "law of Moses," in Gal. 2: 16, Paul says, "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Now note it please, works of the law. Then contrast it with the faith of Christ. This is the very thing Paul was discussing in Eph. 2: 8, 9, when he says, "We are saved by grace, through faith," and then says, "Not by works (the works of the law) lest any man should boast."

When I hear a preacher quote Eph. 2: 9, and then apply the expression, "Not of works lest any man shall boast," to acts of obedient faith as men respond to the commands of the Gospel of Christ, I know he is ignorant, or else he is just a plain sectarian infidel, and desires to cast reflection on the command, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22: 16).

From this conclusion no intelligence can escape. In John 1: 17, we read: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Since now, the law of Moses has been annulled and taken out of the way, we are under "grace and truth." "The all things" commanded by Jesus! This "the all things" (Matt. 28: 20) commanded by Jesus is "The faith once for all time delivered by the saints" (Jude 3). Every item that pertains to life and godliness is couched in "the faith of Christ." "The faith of Christ" is inclusive and exclusive! It includes all that Christ wants us to believe, teach and practice religiously, and it excludes everything we are not to teach, believe and practice religiously.

In his sermon on that great and notable day of the

beginning, when repentance and remission of sins was preached for the first time, in the name of Jesus Christ, Peter said: "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly (believe without doubt) that God has raised up Jesus from the dead, and made him both Lord and Christ." The hearts of those who had demanded the blood and death of the Son of God were pierced, and they cried out to Peter and the rest of the apostles, and said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then, guided by the Holy Spirit, Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." See Acts 2: 37, 38. Three thousand people gladly accepted this, and were baptized, and the Lord added them to the church. That being the truth and the way, it then follows that this is truth and the way now. And in this very same way people are saved and added to the church now. It was in this very way they became Christians. This is the way "the heart is purified by faith" (Acts 15: 9). But they were babes in Christ now, and hence they continued with the apostles in fellowship and breaking of bread, and as "lively stones" they became a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, offering up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Note, please, "By Jesus Christ." That is by the authority of Christ Jesus. Being governed by the authority of Christ Jesus, we speak the same things and are joined together in the same mind, and there is no division among us. In this way all preachers will preach the same Gospel, and all Christians will have the same form of work and worship, and there will be no room for "schism" in the body, which is the church.

This "rule" settles the question of "instrumental music" in the church, and leaves no room for wrangling along any line. In "the faith of Christ" (wonderful system) the Holy Spirit, through Paul, says, Eph. 5: 19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, *singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord*." This is plain, and no room for quibble and doubt. Oh, brethren, "Only let your conversation (deportment) be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear

of your affairs, that we stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Beautiful and timely, this admonition. Note this expression, please: "Striving together, for the faith of the Gospel." Striving together for the faith of Christ. Divine system. It's full and complete. Beautiful Jerusalem Church. Beautiful Jerusalem Gospel, so plain and simple, "that the wayfaring man, though fool, should not err therein." Make no compromise, brethren, but preach it in the love of it, and in tears persuade men to flee the wrath to come.

Not long until that "crowning day," and remember it will be "the day of judgment," too, and we will have to give an account to God in that great day for our stewardship. Be faithful unto death. Let no man rob thee of thy crown. Be instant in season and out of season. The Lord, the righteous Judge, will reward us when He comes. Tell the people that "the priesthood has been changed, and that of necessity a change has been made in the law" (Heb. 7: 12). Point to that scene on Golgotha, where Jesus died for sinners, and in the language of the apostle, say, "Though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered: And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey him*" (Heb. 5: 8, 9).

Have no fears in assuring men and women that we are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. But He shed His blood in His death. (John 19: 33, 34.) But we are baptized into His death! (Rom. 6: 3.) That we "purify our souls in obeying the truth," that this constitutes the new birth: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever" (I Peter 1: 18-23). After His resurrection He said: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature, and he that believeth (the thing preached) and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark 16: 15, 16). I would as soon be ashamed of Jesus, who said it, as to be ashamed of the things He said! In Mark 8: 38, Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this sinful

and adulterous generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with all the holy angels." Me and my words. Behold the *balances,* and Jesus on the one side and His words on the other! "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." Scoffers, mockers, cowards, infidels and sectarians alike, tell us "that you do not have to be baptized to be saved." No doubt but Satan laughs in his sleeves when his ministers unite in telling you that "You do not have to be baptized to be saved." But the Son of God said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Who shall be trust? And why trust Him? In the beginning, in Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, Peter, the inspired mouthpiece, preached, and all of the other apostles sanctioned his message! Not one of them said, "Why, no, you do not have to be baptized for the remissions of sins." Not one of them said, "Get saved first and then be baptized if you want to." Not one of them said baptism is just an outward expression of that which has already taken place in your heart. Not one of them ever said, "You can be saved out of the church as well as you can in it." All of this stuff is sectarian infidelity, uttered by the haters of the Gospel of the Son of God.

The blessed Old Book tells us of our origin and of our destiny—of what we are, and what we will be! All that we know or can know in this life about Christ, His kingdom, and the plan of entrance into it, is found in this grand Old Book. Heaven and its grandeur, hell and its horrors are portrayed in this great Book of God. Then I beg and plead, oh my friends, let us *believe it and obey it,* that when we come to the crossing of the Great Divide, we may in confidence go into the very presence of God in the judgment with faith in His Word, faith which knew no bounds, but that trusted in Him, as the all in all. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and that they may enter in through the gates into the city." (They that do His commandments.) "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." All spiritual blessings are in Christ, and all future promised blessings are to those only who put on

Christ. Time and opportunity are yours today! To-morrow may not come. Death is certain, and in view of that sad, sad time, I beg that you accept salvation, as it is offered in the Gospel of Christ, and live that noble Christian life, which makes you happy both in life and in death. Oh, the joy that awaits the faithful over there.

Affectionately yours in the glorious hope of the Gospel. Amen!

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

By J. H. Hines

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God, by reason of which the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? But, according to his promise, we look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight" (II Peter 3: 10-14).

There is no truth more clearly taught in God's Word, no fact more firmly established, no warning more emphatic that that each one of us shall give an account of himself to God. (Rom. 14:12.) Paul says: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5: 10). Again, "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment" (Heb. 9: 27).

On that last great day man will not be judged in the aggregate, but each one by himself and for himself.

After the reign of mercy comes the reign of justice; after the Gospel that grants pardon and peace, the law that inflicts punishment and sorrow. Those who have slighted the invitation and rejected the Gospel will be arrested and brought before the bar of justice, that they may receive the reward of sin done in the body.

THE DAY OF THE LORD

This day is called by the Apostle Peter, "the day of the Lord" (II Peter 3: 10), because for it all other days are; from it all days borrow their value, and into it the interests of all other days will be crowded, from the first day that dawned upon man's fair Eden home, until the last day when time shall be no more.

It will be the day of the Lord, because then He will so demonstrate His power and justice in saving the righteous and punishing the wicked as to call forth the approval of the entire universe. The principles of His law, the righteousness of His claims, the justice of its penalty, the principles upon which He will save some and punish others, the entire system of His government, will be so perfectly endorsed that heaven, earth and hell will say: "Even so, Amen." (Rev. 1: 7.) Then, for the first time since the creation of man, God will receive universal glory.

It will be the day of the Lord because Christ will be the Judge, the Judge of the living and the dead. (I Peter 4: 5). "All judgment hath been given unto him. For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son" (John 5: 22). Jesus said: "But I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth" (John 8: 50). The Apostle Paul said: "He that judgeth me is the Lord" (I Cor. 4: 4). "Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God" (I Cor. 4: 5). Thence we see that the judgment is the consummation of the great scheme of redemption. Jesus began it and will finish it He began it in humilation and suffering; He will end it with all authority and power. Paul says: "Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule and all authority and power" (I Cor. 15: 24). That will be a great day when the saints and the sinners shall be parted right and left.

"Then every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1: 7). "The saints on the right hand shall worship him that liveth forever and ever and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created" (Rev. 4: 10-11). "The wicked, even those that pierced him shall be there, and shall say to the mountains and the rocks, fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who is able to stand?" (Rev. 6: 16, 17).

WILL COME

Reader, this is no dream; it is a great coming fact. The Apostle Peter says: "The day of the Lord will come." In the days of the apostles there were mockers who denied this great doctrine and said: "Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Peter 3: 4). But Peter says: "For this they willfully forget that there were heavens from of old, and an earth compacted out of water and amidst water, by the word of God: by which means the world that then was being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men," II Peter 3: 5-7. After meeting their arguments by producing examples from the Word of God, that liveth and abideth; he shows the fallacy of such reasonings by stating that "the Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness; but is long-suffering—not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," I Peter 3: 9.

The day of the Lord will come—is a truth taught throughout the Bible. Isaiah says: "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to make the land a desolation, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it," Isa. 13: 9. The prophet Zephaniah

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says: "Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath: but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy: for he will make an end, yea, a terrible end, of all them that dwell in the land," Zeph. 1: 18.

Hence, he exhorts us to "seek Jehovah, all ye meek of the earth, that have kept His ordinances; seek righteousness, seek meekness; it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah's anger" (Zeph. 2: 3).

Paul admonished the church of God at Corinth "to deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 5: 5).

SUCH A DAY IS OFTEN SPOKEN OF IN THE BIBLE

The devil and demons expected such a day when the Saviour was on the earth; they cried out, saying, "What have we to do with thee, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" (Matt. 8: 29). Jesus pointed men to that day, He upbraided the cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not. Hear Him: "Woe unto thee Chorazin! woe unto thee Bethesadia! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you." Reader, what about you? "And thou, Capernaum, shalt thou be exalted unto heaven? thou shalt go down into Hades; for if the mighty works had been done in Sodom which were done in thee, it would have remained unto this day. But I say unto you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee" (Matt. 11: 20-24).

In view of this day we are commanded to repent and turn to the Lord. Paul closed that wonderful sermon of Mars Hill by saying: "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent; inasmuch as He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in

righteousness by the man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts 17: 30, 31). Standing before Felix, Paul reasoned "righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come" (Acts 24: 25).

Reader, it is coming to you; it is coming to me. "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God" (Rom. 14: 10). Sodom and Gommorrah will be there, Matt. 10: 15. The people of Nineveh will be there, Matt. 12: 41. The Queen of Sheba will be there, Matt. 12: 42. The antediluvians, the postdiluvians; all races, languages, and nations. What a mixed multitude! What a gathering!

The Bible speaks of many gatherings, but this will be the greatest of all. That was a great gathering held by the children of Israel on the banks of the Red Sea. That was a great gathering at Sinai, when the Law was given amid the thunderings and lightnings, and fire and smoke. That was a great gathering on Mt. Carmel, when Elisha defied the 400 prophets of Baal. Those were great gatherings on the banks of the Jordan, when John the Baptist, that unique prophet, warned the people to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. That was a wonderful gathering, known as the Passover. That was a great gathering in Jerusalem on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of the Christ, when the Gospel was preached for the first time; when about 3,000 souls submitted to the mandates of the Lord and Christ. But no gathering has ever been held anywhere or at any time that could compare with this one. Then we shall give an account of the deeds done in the body, II Cor. 5: 10.

AS A THIEF

Peter says: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief" (II Peter 3: 10). That is, unexpectedly. Christ says: "In the hour ye think not." Hear Him. Take heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is. It is as when a man, sojourning in another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, to each one his work, commanded also the porter to watch.

"Watch, therefore, for ye know not when the lord of the house cometh, whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark 13: 33-37). But, says one, the judgment can not come now, for Christ said: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24: 14). But Paul said it was preached in all creation under heaven, Col. 1: 23.

The thief does not send word stating when he will come. And Christ has not revealed in His will when His day will come. But He plainly tells us, that of "that day and hour, knoweth no one, not even the angels, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. 24: 36.

Watch, therefore, "for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken through. Therefore, be ye also ready; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24: 42-44).

SOME OF THE THINGS THAT WILL HAPPEN ON THAT DAY

Paul says: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (I Thess. 4: 16). That He will render "vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus" (II Thess. 1: 8.

Peter says: "The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Peter 3: 10).

John says: "The earth and the heavens fled away" (Rev. 20: 11).

Jesus will come to judge angels, II Peter 2: 4, and men, Rom. 2: 16.

The day of judgment is the necessary conclusion of

the Gospel of peace. Then Christ will close the Book of mercy, lay aside the priestly robe, wind up the period of grace, and come to judge the secrets of men according to the Gospel of Christ, Rom. 2: 16. The sinner may fall upon his knees, and with streaming eyes lift his hands to heaven, and plead for mercy, but the day of mercy has passed. In the place of a smiling face of a sympathetic Saviour, the stern brow of an awful Judge will fill his soul with terror.

Then Jesus "shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him; then shall He sit on the throne of His glory; and before him shall be gathered all the nations." What a multitude will be there!

BOOKS SHALL BE OPENED

John says: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, the great and small, standing before the throne; and books were opened, and another Book was opened, which is the Book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. 20: 11-12).

The book of death will be opened. The roll will be called. Those whose names are written therein will take their stand on the left of the Judge.

The book of life will be opened. The names found therein will be announced and they will take their places on the right side of the throne, Matt. 25: 33.

A line will be drawn separating angels from devils, husbands from wives, parents from children—a line drawn through nearly every family on the earth—a Jacob on this side, an Esau on that side. Here and there a few families together, some on the left side, some on the right side. They are separated forever. A temporal separation from loved ones is painful, but this separation is forever.

Walk along the line upon the left of the Judge. There you will find all the unbelievers, disbelievers, idolaters, murderers, thieves, drunkards, adulterers, blasphemers,

liars, slanderers, traitors, worldly-minded, hypocrites, luke-warm members, and back-sliders.

There you will find kings, presidents, statesmen, governors, heroes, scholars, parents and children, wives and mothers—the angels of the household who entwined the fibres of love about our hearts.

Every heart in that vast throng is bleeding and breaking with sorrow; every face is coursed by tears; every countenance is pale with horror. They stare at each other—the ruined mother upon the ruined son. The wretched father upon the wretched daughter—they shudder with anguish and terror. In misery they groan and a yawning hell growls beneath them.

Walk along the other side. Upon the right are the pure, holy, righteous; the patriarchs, prophets, martyrs—saints of old and all Christians who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, Rev. 7: 14.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matt. 25: 34). Then angels, archangels, saints, and the followers of the Christ will fall in line and the grand procession will pass through the gates of pearl into the New Jesuralem to bask in the love of God while the ages roll on.

Then shall the Judge say to them on the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25: 41). For the first time the wicked obey. Then devils and men will flee howling from the judgment seat. The dungeons of hell are open to receive them; then bolted to keep them, and the eternity of their night of sin sets in.

"Seeing that these things are thus all to be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness, looking for and earnestly desiring the coming of the day of God" (II Peter 3: 11-12).

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in His sight, II Peter 3: 14.

"THE CITY FOURSQUARE"

"THE CITY FOURSQUARE"

By Samuel E. Witty

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
O how I long for thee!
When will my sorrows have an end?
Thy joys, when shall I see?"

"By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11: 8-10).

"And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband." "And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal" (Revelation 21: 2-16).

This world is not our eternal abiding home. "For we have not here an abiding city, but we seek after the city which is to come" (Hebrews 13: 14). Like the patriarchs of old, "Here we are but straying pilgrims." As followers of Christ we are journeying to the eternal city—"the city that lieth foursquare." Since our foreparents were expelled from the garden of Eden there has been an aching void which this world could not fill, a "desire for a better country, that is a heavenly." This world is but a temporary dwelling place soon to pass away. "But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by

the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (II Peter 3: 7).

While God has purposed the destruction of this world, he is long suffering, "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." God has provided the way by which we may escape the "destruction of ungodly men." "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." "And this life is in his Son." This life is a period of probation. "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6: 2). Probation ends at death. "And inasmuch as it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this cometh judgment" (Heb. 9: 27). Judgment, not an opportunity to repent, comes after death. In view of the coming judgment, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy living and godliness?"

After saying, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up," the apostle assures us that, "according to his promise, we look for a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This great event, the dissolution of the material universe, will be "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his works: to them that by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life: but unto them that are factious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, shall be wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that worketh evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek; but glory and honor and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek: for there is no respect of persons with God" (Romans 2: 5-11).

"So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, that moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and
soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

Man's first home was in a garden of delights. In that paradise of Eden there were trees pleasant to the sight and good for food, "the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." The garden was watered by a river that parted, and became four heads. The delightful occupation of the man, whom God had made, was to dress and keep the garden. His provision consisted of the fruit of the trees. Upon him there was placed one restraint. He was forbidden to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Having been created physically, mentally and spiritually perfect, he was supremely happy. Had he remained obedient unto the law God gave him his happiness would have been unending.

The first tragic event of this world was the disobedience of Adam and Eve. As a result of their transgression they were driven from their home in Eden; separated from the tree of life; forfeited their right to the favor of God, and became subject unto death. The far-reaching effects of that terrible deed can only be measured by eternity. Since then this world has been a place of sin, shame, sorrow, sickness and death. On account of the hopeless condition of this world, the tragedy of the ages was enacted upon the cross of Calvary, when the sun refused to shine, and the earth did quake, and the Son of God, our blessed Lord and Saviour, bowed His head and gave up His spirit. The last tragedy of this world is described by the poet as follows;

"And realms shall be dissolved, and empires be
no more,
And they shall bow to death, who ruled from
shore to shore;
And the great globe itself (so the holy writ-
ings tell),
With the rolling firmament, where the starry
armies dwell,
Shall melt with fervent heat—they shall all
pass away,
Except the love of God, which shall live and
last for aye."

The eternal city of the redeemed will be in "the holy city, new Jerusalem"—"the city that lieth foursquare." While the beloved Apostle John was upon the Isle of Patmos he was permitted to see "a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." His description of that wonderful sight is recorded in Revelation 4: 2-8. "Straightway I was in the Spirit: and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting upon the throne; and he that sat was to look upon like a jasper stone and a sardius: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, like an emerald to look upon. And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones: and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting, arrayed in white garments; and on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightning and voices and thunders. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God: and before the throne, as it were a sea of glass like unto crystal; and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, four living creatures full of eyes before and behind. And the first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf, and the third creature had a face as of a man, and the fourth creature was like a flying eagle: And the four living creatures, having each one of them six wings, are full of eyes round about and within: and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord

God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come."

The Old Testament prophets, Isaiah and Ezekiel, also had visions of the throne of God, and the tenantry of heaven. In all of the descriptions there is indicated the glory, power, wisdom and purity of God. The throne represents the sovereign power of God. The Apostle Paul speaks of Him as the "King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God," and ascribes unto Him "honor and glory forever and forever." Daniel, in speaking of the perpetuity of His reign, says, "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation" (Daniel 4: 3). Speaking of the majesty of the Most High, the same prophet says, "I beheld till thrones were placed, and one that was ancient of days did sit; his raiment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames and the wheels thereof burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened" (Daniel 7: 9, 10). In referring to the universality of His power, David says, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth" (Psalms 72: 8). The righteous character of His judgments is indicated as follows: "And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither decide after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his waist, and faithfulness the girdle of his loins" (Isaiah 11: 3-5).

As a river watered the earthly paradise, so the "river of water of life, bright as crystal," proceeds "out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Earthly streams sometimes become contaminated, and the supply exhausted; but the water of life is always pure, "bright as crystal,"

and continually flows from the throne of God, the fountain of life.

As the tree of life was in the midst of the earthly paradise, so the apostle says, "And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The pangs of hunger and thirst have added to the suffering of sighing humanity in this world, but the prophet Isaiah, in describing the glorious future, says, "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for he that hath mercy on them will lead them, even by springs of water will he guide them" (Isaiah 49: 10).

The beautiful shepherd psalm strikingly sets forth the provision and protection of God for His people:

"Jehovah is my shepherd; I shall not want;
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
He leadeth me beside still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; for thou art with me;
Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me;
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:
Thou hast anointed my head with oil;
My cup runneth over;
Surely goodness and loving kindness shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of Jehovah forever."

Contemplating the rich provisions of God's amazing grace, the poet recognizes that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning" (James 1: 17).

"O Thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Calls for songs of loudest praise."

The Psalmist explains, "Oh taste and see that Jehovah is good: Blessed is the man that taketh refuge in him. Oh fear Jehovah, ye his saints; for there is no want to them that fear him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger; but they that seek Jehovah shall not want any good thing" (Psalms 34: 8-10).

The Patriarch Job, and the Psalmist David, both speak of the brevity and sorrows of our earthly pilgrimage. The former says, "Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14: 1). The latter says, "We bring our years to an end as a sigh. The days of our years are three score years and ten, or even by reason of strength four score years; yet is their pride but labor and sorrow; for it is soon gone, and we fly away" (Psalms 90: 9, 10). We all know what it is to endure pain of the body and affliction of the soul. Doubtless one of the most sorrowful experiences of this life is to say farewell to our friends and loved ones just before their bodies are consigned to the narrow limits of the tomb. But my dear friends, we have the comforting assurance that the time is coming when "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them, and they shall be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God: and he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more: the first things are passed away" (Revelation 21: 3, 4).

One of the joys of heaven will be to look upon the face of our Redeemer. "We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is. And every one that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3: 3). "And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face" (Revelation 22: 3, 4.)

"Face to face with Christ my Saviour,
Face to face—what will it be?
When with rapture I behold him,
Jesus Christ who died for me."

When doubting Thomas saw the Saviour after his resurrection, he exclaimed, "My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20: 28, 29). When the Apostle John upon Patmos turned to see the voice that spoke unto him he saw "in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto a son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about at the breast with a golden girdle. And his head and his hair were white as wool, white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto burning brass, as if it had been refined in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters." When the disciple whom Jesus loved saw him he "Fell at his feet as one dead" (Revelation 1: 13-16). He remembered him as his teacher, his friend and his Redeemer. As the "Good Master," He spake as never man spake, for He spake with authority. As a friend he comforted the broken hearted, helped the weak and cheered the lowly. As Redeemer he preached good tidings to the poor, admonished the fallen, and forgave the penitent.

"A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord,
A wonderful Saviour to me;
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
Where rivers of pleasure I see."

The Christian life is a life of service Jesus was Lord and teacher, yet He says He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20: 28). Jesus taught His disciples that true greatness consisted of service. "But whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be your servant" (Matthew 20: 27). In following in the footsteps of Jesus it is necessary to work while it is day.

There is so much to do, and the night soon cometh when no man can work. Christians are represented as laborers in a vineyard. In order to receive the reward promised it is necessary for all to enter the vineyard, and toil till the close of day—unto the night of death. The reward promised is peace, and rest. "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for these things, give diligence that ye may be found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight" (II Peter 3: 14). "In thy presence is fulness of joy: in thy right hand there are pleasures forever more" (Psalms 16: 11). "There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God" (Hebrews 4: 9). The terrible doom of unfaithful servants is expressed as follows: "And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 25: 30). "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matthew 24: 41).

It has doubtless become evident that only those who make the necessary preparation will be permitted to enter into the eternal city of our God, but this is such an important phase of the subject, I want to clearly point out the conditions upon which there will be "richly supplied unto you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1: 11). Revelation 22: 14 bears upon the subject. "Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right to come to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city." That we may know what it means to wash our robes, I refer to another passage. One of the elders, speaking of the white robed throng before the throne of God, said: "These are they that come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7: 14). That our redemption is accomplished by the blood of Christ is stated in I Peter 1: 18, 19: "Knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed

down from our fathers; but with precious blood, as a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ."

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains."

But in order to have our sins washed away by the blood of Christ, it is necessary to obey the Gospel. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 1: 16: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." The conditions of Gospel obedience are: Faith, repentance, and baptism. Note the following Scriptures: "Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name" (John 20: 30, 31). "Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38). After thus coming into covenant relationship with God, we are to add such Christian graces as faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. (II Peter 1: 5-7.) We should pray without ceasing, meditate upon the law of the Lord day and night, give of our means as we have been prospered, forsake not the assembling of ourselves together, visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Then "when Jesus comes to reward his servants" we will be "found in peace, without spot and blameless in his sight."

In the description the Apostle John gives of the "holy city, new Jerusalem," he says, "And the city lieth foursquare, and the length thereof is as great as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed twelve thousand furlongs: the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal." As there are eight furlongs in a mile, the

dimensions given indicate a distance of fifteen hundred miles in every direction, including up. While comparatively few people will be saved, yet, since creation's dawn countless multitudes have lived acceptable lives before God, and will dwell forever in the eternal home of the soul, and we have the blessed assurance there will be room enough for all.

"There's be room enough in heaven;
There'll be room enough for me.
If I bear the cross of Jesus,
And a faithful follower be."

As Eastern cities in ancient times had walls about them for protection, so this wonderful city is represented as having a "wall great and high." The glory and stability of its character is indicated by the fact that "the foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all manner of precious stones." Its accessability for the righteous is assured in that there are "twelve gates," on the East three gates, on the West three gates, on the North three gates and on the South three gates, "and at the gates twelve angels." As angels guarded the way of the tree of life in the earthly paradise, so they watch at the entrance to the eternal city, freely admitting the righteous, but shutting out "the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolators, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie" (Revelation 22: 15).

In the former dispensation God's people assembled at stated times, at the place where He had recorded His name, and worshipped in His holy temple. In this dispensation we have "the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands," that glorious blood bought institution, the church of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But when the beloved disciple viewed the holy city he saw "no temple therein: for the Lord God the Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple thereof," and throughout the countless ages, all the hosts of heaven, and all the redeemed of earth, will serve before the "throne of God and the Lamb."

In the kind providence of God this world is illuminated by the light of the sun by day, the moon and the stars by night, but that city "which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God, 'hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine upon it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the lamp thereof is the Lamb," and glory be to God,

"THERE SHALL BE NO NIGHT THERE."

"In the land of fadeless day
Lies the 'city four-square;'
It shall never pass away,
And there is 'no night there.'

"All the gates of pearl are made
In the 'city four-square;'
All the streets with gold are laid,
And there is 'no night there.'

"And the gates shall never close
To the "city four-square;"
There life's crystal river flows,
And there is 'no night there.'

"There they need no sunshine bright,
In the 'city four-square;'
For the Lamb is all the light,
And there is 'no night there.'

CHORUS.

"God shall 'wipe away all tears;'
There's no death, no pain, nor fears;
And they count not time by years,
For there is 'no night there.'"

THE FOREORDINATION OF GOD

THE FOREORDINATION OF GOD

By Jno. T. Lewis

The foreordination of God was simply God's eternal purpose, out of which was evolved the great scheme of man's redemption in Christ. Before the foundation of the world God Almighty, the great Architect, worked out, in his own mind, the plans and specifications by which the church of God should be built. God foreordained, predestinated, or predetermined from the beginning that certain characters should be put into the church; but not that certain individuals should be saved and certain others should be lost, as the God-dishonoring Calvinistic theory puts it.

Although the plans and specifications of the church were completed, and set before God before man was, they remained a mystery hid in God, till He "revealed them unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (Eph. 3: 5). To illustrate, an architect conceives, in his own mind, a magnificent building, he works out, and completes the plans and specifications, decreeing not that certain stones, or certain pieces of timber should go into the building; but rather that certain grades or kinds of material should go into the building. The plans and specifications are perfected and set before the architect's mind as a complete building before the ground is ever broken for the erection of the real building. The architect's drawing of the building would be as much like the building as a picture made of it after it was completed. However, the plans and specifications are always a mystery hid in the mind of the architect till he sees fit to reveal them. Now, if the creature can do this, what is it that the omnipotent and omniscient Creator can not do?

Let us now study God's plans. "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose"

(Rom. 8: 28). In the study of this subject we must keep in mind God's purpose and his call, for it was according to God's eternal purpose that only the called should go into the church. "For whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He foreordained, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. 8: 29, 30). Here we have the scheme of man's redemption, as it was perfected in God's mind, and set before him as completed, before the foundation of the world. From this plan we learn that man's eternal destiny depends upon God doing three things for him. God must call him, justify him, and finally glorify him. But God will do neither one of these things unless man looks to Him for salvation.

"To the end that ye should walk worthily of God, who calleth you into his own kingdom and glory" (I Thes. 2: 12). This shows that God calls people "into his own kingdom and glory." But do not jump to the conclusion that His call is something mysterious, "better felt than told." Let us learn from God's plan how he calls. "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you through our Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thes. 2: 13, 14). From this we learn that we were "chosen from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." We, who? Every responsible being on God's earth, that will accept the Gospel call. Because God has foreordained, or decreed beforehand, that man should obtain the "glory of our Lord Jesus Christ," only through the Gospel call. And thus, according to God's eternal purpose, it must be. We can not change His decrees.

Therefore Jesus Christ said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that

disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16: 15, 16). That is, give every responsible being a chance to hear and accept the Gospel call. According to the foreordination of God, man is a free moral agent, and must accept, or reject the Gospel call for himself. "And to you that are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus; who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (II Thes. 1: 7-9). Therefore God has predetermined that every accountable being must obey the Gospel, or "suffer eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might." This destruction is not annihilation; but an eternal separation from the "face of the Lord and from the glory of His might." Like the rich man, if we are lost, our plaintive whines, although many and pathetic, will never draw "God's face and the glory of his might" toward us.

Therefore God has foreordained that all preparations to meet Him must be made in this life, and in obedience to the Gospel plan. "Though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5: 8, 9). Remember that God has foreordained that you should obey His Son. Have you obeyed Him? "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2: 4). Of course, this does not mean that you can not tell the truth about anything; but it means that God's truth is not in you. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark 16: 16). If you have believed and been baptized according to the specifications of the great Architect, you have the right to claim that you have been pardoned, and therefore know your Saviour; but if you have not believed and been baptized in obedience to His command, and claim that you know Him, He says you are a liar and the truth is

not in you. Going into an "inquiry room" at a union meeting, or "hitting the sawdust trail," or "joining the church of your choice" is not obeying Him. These things are not in the blue print, the New Testament, and therefore were not ordained by the great Architect, God Almighty. When we change the plans in any way they cease to be God's plans, become man's plans, and must be rejected.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ; even as he chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love: having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved: in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, I say, in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will; to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ: in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the Gospel of your salvation—in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession, unto the paise of his glory" (Eph. 1: 3-14).

The above is the longest sentence in the Bible, so far as I know, and it is full of the foreordination of God. From it we learn that all spiritual blessings are in Christ, that is, in his spiritual body or church. So when you are thinking about spiritual blessings you may eliminate

from your mind every other institution on the face of God's earth—"every spiritual blessing is in Him." There are other institutions that can give socials, render programs of different kinds, to entertain you; but when they offer spiritual blessings they offer something they do not have, and therefore can not give. We also learn that God "chose us in Him before the foundation of the world." This choice, of course, was simply in God's purpose or plan. We learn, too, that we are to be "holy and without blemish before him in love." This is the kind of material that God decreed or foreordained should go into the church. From verse 7 we learn that "in him we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace." Outside of Him there is no blood, and therefore no forgiveness or redemption. Remember, now, that so far as responsible beings are concerned, being in Christ, and being in His church is one and the same thing. We can not be in His church and not be in Him.

Now, since "every spiritual blessing is in Christ," and "our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses," certainly we want to learn how God has foreordained that responsible beings must enter Christ. "In whom ye also having heard the word of the truth, the Gospel of our salvation." Therefore we must learn from "the truth, the Gospel of our salvation," how to enter Christ. Of course, you might say we enter Christ one way, and I might say we enter Him another way, and both of us might be wrong, so we will say nothing; but let Paul tell us how he, and the Romans got into Christ. "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried, therefore, with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6: 3, 4). Therefore if Paul and the Romans were "baptized into Christ Jesus" by being "buried with him through baptism into death," we conclude that that is God's ordained way of entering His kingdom. That there may be no doubt left in your mind as to this

fact, I quote Gal. 3: 26, 27, "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." God foreordained that all spiritual blessings should be in Christ, and he also foreordained that we should be "baptized into Christ." Who will change his decrees?

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any Gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema" (Gal. 1: 8, 9). Therefore men or angels can only incur the wrath of God Almighty by changing His plans or decrees, and can save nobody.

"For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles—if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward; how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ; which in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; to-wit: that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel, whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power" (Eph. 3: 1-7). Here we learn again that God's perfect plan or scheme of redemption, which was complete in His own mind "before the foundation of the world," was a "mystery not made known unto the sons of man," until it was revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." A mystery once revealed can no longer be called a mystery. Therefore it would be ridiculous to speak of the plan of salvation as a mystery, since it has "been announced unto us through them that preached the Gospel by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven" (Read I Peter 1: 9-12).

"The mystery which for ages hath been hid in God

who created all things" was simply the Gospel, which is God's power "unto salvation to every one that believeth." In obedience to the Gospel we become "fellow-heirs, fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus." "For I make known to you, brethren, as touching the Gospel which was preached by me, that it is not after man. For neither did I receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1: 11, 12). Paul received his ministry, and the Gospel which he preached, from Jesus Christ, not from man. Paul was sent by Jesus Christ "to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things" (Eph. 3: 9). Therefore Paul's teaching was plain and simple enough for "all men to see," or his ministry was a failure. Which do you believe?

I believe every responsible being, that is honest with himself, and with his God can not only see, but will see, and obey the Gospel of God. God foreordained that man should see, believe and obey the Gospel, and I had just as soon question the existence of the eternal God Himself as to doubt His foreordination. My fellow-traveler to eternity, you now have before you God's eternal purpose and His decrees. Will you obey the Gospel and be saved? or will you reject it and be damned?

THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION

THE PLAN OF REDEMPTION

By John Allen Hudson

Text: I Peter 1: 9-12.

"Receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desired to look into."

This big, beautiful world in which I am placed makes me stand in awe, infinitesimal speck that I am in the midst of a boundless universe. At night beneath the silent, blinking stars there is borne in upon my soul, without words, an eloquence and fluency, and intangible enlargement of soul, that defies description. It can no more be framed into speech than can be drafted upon a chromatic scale the song the angels sang when God finished His work in the dawn of creation. By that brooding, conscious connection with the infinite and the eternal, that makes me dream into ages and eons of time, I am reminded of a scheme so vast that my heart aches and yearns into the intensity and the infinity of it. This indescribable yearning, this conscious connection with something more than earth and death may be a part of the music of the spheres that flow into the ears of the Omnipotent God, and this music of the spheres comes from a harmonious development and a relationship that bespeaks a plan, an infinite scheme.

The maze and vortex of the world and its life, involving tragedy and comedy, revolution and permanency, fiendish cruelty and divine benevolence, excruciating pain

and ecstatic joy, viewed in the light of a few decades is meaningless, but contemplated in the light of millenniums and as subserving a divine plan of the Omnipresent and Everlasting God the threads and swirls of it are unraveled and the silken threads of Purpose, Thought, Plan stretch from everlasting to everlasting, drawn taut in the immaculate hands of the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Son of God!

What must the world mean to the infidel? What must it mean to one who sees not purpose and plan? If it is not related to the eternal verities, to Deity with related virtues of righteousness, love, pity for suffering, confident maintaining of truth as stronger than error, what then can virtue, love, pity, truth mean to the poor creatures on this finite plane? Indeed, the war of right and wrong, the swelling of the heart by love, the moving of the soul by pity become a part of a divine plan. And these are ever related to a person—to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Almighty Creator, for abstract virtues mean nothing. Hence the good and true must argue a plan. Plan is everywhere apparent.

Dry, infecund desert sands, towering mountains, lofty ranges and plateaus, spreading trees, flowing rivers and rolling seas sporatically and separately mean nothing, but taken altogether they make a quite wonderful world.

Particles of moisture, molecules of air, rays of light and waves of heat are without significance when detached, but when, by inherent laws that reach out to embrace seasons, combinations are formed, the world is turned into a beautiful green, and the ebullient sap of spring forces young blades and buds into view. And how can one look upon the world in spring and not be enraptured? Who can see it at such a season and not think of a plan?

The brook that flows on forever, the ranges that rise majestic, the sun that shines in brightness together with the eternal swish and roar of the sea and the silence of the forests of the earth are parts of an infinite plan.

Beyond chance and fate and circumstances, materially

and spiritually, there is a certainty and fixedness of intention and conclusion, purposes of the Creator, that can no more be affected by man—with individual freedom never infringed upon, strangely, almost paradoxically—than the North and South poles can be bound together by His purile hands! Purpose, plan!

"Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened with the process of the suns,"

said the poet Tennyson in Locksley Hall.

But while the material universe argues purpose and purpose and plan can be clearly argued from it, my theme is specially plain as it relates to the scheme of *redemption.*

Redemption is consequent upon four distinct things or elements. An object or person is the first. The second is a past possessor. The third, a present possessor. The fourth, a price. The redemption we are considering affects eternal spirit, the dust of the earth, the throne of God, the Heir of Heaven, the darkness of hades, demons and angels, all the virtues, and God in His supernatural mansions. Behold what a cataclysm, what an avalanche of forces, what a precipitation of powers when man sinned! What a thraldom of struggle, what awsome consequences! No comic action this upon a puppet-stage, but heavy actors playing major roles. Not three hours, nor four, nor five, but the curtains were drawn in Eden and God gave the prologue. Then the action began in a blast of thunder. The first couple sinned. Slowly, majestically, for great themes take great time and dignity, the scenes shifted time after time, but the action progresses beyond Mt. Sinai, beyond Jerusalem to Calvary and there a tragedy was enacted that makes all other tragedies appear as the happy conclusion of a farce in comparison to the tragedy of Othello. Mt. Calvary! Mt. Calvary! At once the darkness of a night of Egypt settles there and a shaft of refulgent glory falls athwart the "tree of the cross" that has is its source the light of an infinite love that is more needful to the human family than the physical luminary that holds the center of this solar system.

But, under a figure, I was led away from the discussion of the plan of redemption in its parts to an attempt to look at it as a whole.

The Bible declares that God made man out of the dust of the earth. Whether he worked as a plastic sculptor and pressed the clay of earth to its exact place for each part, moulding and shaping with great and slow care each limb, and then raised, with one hand the inert body to a half reclining position, and then from a kneeling posture Himself, breathed into the still undilating nostrils of the earthly model "the breath of life" it matters not. The process is unimportant. The important thing is that man was created by the Lord God and that he was created for a high purpose. However, I do not want to be misunderstood. I do not think that God employed an evolutionary process. From the promise that God made man, according to the Genesis account, man did not descend from a long chain of important ancestry, but came direct from the hand of God. That I believe.

God placed man over a beautiful garden that he had made eastward in Eden. Even the poet Milton's description of that garden, beggaring description by all others who have tried, must itself be beggared by that glorious garden in which man made his first home. Luscious and succulent fruits, herbs delectable and with refined sweetness, flowers a riot of color in rich profusion giving forth "an odoriferous incense and whispering whence they stole their balmy spoils" were everywhere exposed to view. But in the midst of it all man was dissatisfied. God then made a dazzling creature upon which man could lavish his affections and be entirely satisfied. Eve came from a rib that was taken from the side of the first man.

God left the first couple free and placed but one restriction upon them. He told them that they might eat of every tree in the garden except one. Upon that one he hung a penalty that pales into insignificance every other penalty that has been known. If they violated that law, the law concerning the tree of knowlegde, they would by that very act forfeit every blessing and become heirs of the awful subject of death. Not only would the latter be

true of them, but it would also affect their posterity forever.

The gigantic story of the temptation, transgression, curse and banishment occupies but one short chapter of twenty-four verses in the Book of Genesis. It is told with such simplicity and unadroit directness that one may not realize the greatness of it, the stupenduous effects of it until he has read the rest of the Books of the Bible. That story logically preceded Calvary. It is the key to the Bible. If it were removed there would be no Bible, no tragedy.

Why the tree of knowledge? Why the command to leave it alone? Was it that God must try the loyalty of the creatures he had made? These questions, however much they may amuse or inveigle thought, the Bible has not answered. It is given as an account to be believed. In truth, it is readily believed in the light of human experience. So consistent with our experience of death, banishment from the presence of God, our longing, et cetera, is it that if we did not have that account as an explanation of our present state we should be compelled to invent one to explain things as they now occur. There is nothing out of line about it. It does not interest me as to whether there is the least symbolism about the account. I had just as soon have it literal. I am in need of the explanation, at any rate.

But Adam and Eve were not the only ones to lose by the occurrance. God, the Creator, had his noblest work marred. Justice demanded a severe penalty. That was inflicted. But how it wrung the heart of the Father of Comforts! So God said to the devil, "Because thou hast done this thing thou art cursed above all cattle and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life; and I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3: 14, 15). God cursed the man and the woman and drove them from Eden. He then set a sword that turned every way and cherubim to watch over and keep the way of the tree of life, lest the couple

He had driven out should return and eat of the tree of life and live forever.

Here was given in germ, wrapped in a single promise, that gigantic scheme of redemption that God ultimately required four thousand years to accomplish. The germ that, like the small acorn which contains the spreading, umbrageous and towering oak of a century later, held locked in the immense remedial system was the promise made to the devil: "It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." Here is that seed of the woman, the Lord Jesus Christ, who should bruise the head of the serpent. But Jesus was not to be known to the world as the humble Son of Mary, and to call Himself the Son of man for four long, eventful, heart-racking millenniums. During that great span of time, for every descendant of the primeval pair banished from the presence of Jehovah, the cherubim would still watch over and the flaming sword with two edges still guard the way of the tree of life. That way could not be traversed nor found save by Him who was the Son of God. The sword with two edges would not yield its cold metal into the flexibility that would not pierce until it was passed against the body of the immaculate Son of God. Every child of woman—with two exceptions—died after the manner of the first pair. "Death reigned over them who had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression—for the reason given above—from Adam unto Moses" without law, thence over the Jews by laws and the Gentiles without law until Calvary; and then over all the world besides through the law of Christ except (Oh divine exception! —the remedial system of salvation then effective) when made free "by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8: 1, 2). But this comes to the development in one brief sketch of the plan of life. I wish to canvass the things that intervened and that formed a subsidiary purpose to the central theme of developing that great scheme of redemption.

Let me re-emphasize this point lest it be overlooked. Every action of God or of man from Eden to the cross of Calvary, or those actions that involved nations and

centuries, were given and manifested as subsidiary to the central purpose of developing the plan of redemption. This thought alone, if rightly understood, will give a true importance to the patriarchal age, to the Jewish dispensation of time and to all that occurred within their chronological confines. It will elevate to importance or release to unimportance, as the case may be, every law and every deed of man from Adam to Christ. It will form an absolutely safe rule for Biblical interpretation and application. And it will save from dogma and opinion many who are confused.

But first there was the patriarchal age. In it the head of the family was priest and king. He was the chief ruler. God was connected to men and women by units, and those units were clans or families. This age stretched from the Garden of Eden, began with the power of the cherubim eastward in Eden and ended with the power of Moses, the servant of God, on that lonely mountain in the wilderness since become famous as one of the sacred and great spots of the earth, even the Mountain of Sinai. This age of the patriarchs lasted about twenty-five hundred years. It is the age that held the mighty events of the corruption of the earth and the flood, the faithfulness of Noah, the call of Abraham, the lives of Isaac and Jacob, the sojourn of the Israelites in Goshen in lower Egypt. It was an age of migrations, of the birth of nations, of primary causes and influences that were to affect all the future thought. The germ of a divine purpose and plan, intermingled and interwoven in the frailties of individuals, as in the case of Judah who was in the lineage of our Lord, and in the destinies of nations, as in the exile of the Jews in Egypt and their later return, was slowly unfolding itself, but that development could not be apparent to one age or to one generation. Even those individuals the most favored of the Lord could not know, could not penetrate the divine plan. It was confused and dark to them. Hence the application of the words of the text. "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you (in the Christian age—the last

age—the age of fulfillment and development and accomplishment): searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desired to look into." "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit" (I Cor. 2: 7-10). God has now revealed what was a dark and hidden mystery to all the souls who lived in the age of the patriarchy. The things that should be revealed in Christian age through the apostles of the Lord and Saviour were not vouchsafed to even the prophets who had the Spirit of God to move them in what they wrote. Moreover, the things now revealed in this Christian age were not even known by the angels who had a deep and burning desire to know them.

I have made these diversions into a brighter age and taken these quotations from the age of fulfillment so that we may, as we look at the wanderings of the patriarchs, understand that they moved under confusion. They knew not what God would do at another day. They were like men in a valley on whose right hand and on whose left hand mighty mountains rose that shut off the view of the world beyond.

To shift the thought but slightly and to continue: In the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia great power lines are stretched from craig to craig. Interweaving and winding hither and yon, sometimes this way and that, high up and then running at a sharp decline those lines run through hundreds of miles, but because the way is

sometimes torturous and seemingly uncertain we should not conjecture that they have been strung without a purpose, for they emerge in triumph at last. Along them travels at lightning speed the electric force that lights the city or moves gigantic wheels of machinery. Interweaving hither and yon, sometimes seeming circuitous and indirect, the purpose of God ran through the patriarchal age, stretched from high point to high point, reaching an eminence in Enoch, in Noah, in Abraham, in Joseph, but moving with an increasing purpose toward a grand objective—Calvary and redemption!

When Moses assembled the children of Abraham around the base of Mt. Sinai God abruptly terminated the patriarchal period of time. Mt. Sinai was the highest point, not topographically but Scripturally speaking, between Eden and the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here God prescribed religion and wrote it into dogma. Here he selected a priesthood and set that priesthood over the rest of the nation. The Book of Leviticus contains God's regulations for the performance of the duties of religious service as those duties were given to the tribe of Levi, which was the tribe consecrated and appointed to priesthood.

The scenes connected with the inauguration of the new era were sufficiently distinct and impressive. All Israel were assembled at the foot of the mountain. The mountain was roped off. No beast nor man was allowed to touch it. All were commanded to wash their clothes and bathe their bodies and to go through a three-days' consecration period. When the time was ready, a cloud gathered over the apex of the mountain and slowly and majestically began to settle. It came to rest, as it were, upon the summit. Then a voice was heard, a voice that rolled out over the sub-jacent plain, a voice that shook the earth, a voice that made every knee quake and every mouth to gape with awe and fear—for it was the voice of the Almighty God! God was speaking to these Israelites who were gathered about this mountain in the wilderness! Sacred spot! Tremendous, stupendous event! Extraordinary occasion! But in the midst of the speak-

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ing the people turned to their leader and supplicated him to ask God not to speak any more from the mountain top, for they were ashen with fear. Moses then turned to God and entreated Him for the people. God then invited Moses up to the summit of the mountain. Moses went, taking with him his right-hand man, the intrepid, lion-hearted Joshua. They stayed with God for forty days and nights without food and drink. God took two tables of stone and wrote upon them ten commandments, told Moses to take them and hie him to the people. Moses went to find that the people had so soon turned to idolatry and were worshiping a golden calf. He was so displeased that he cast the tables of stone to the ground and broke them. God called to Moses to withdraw from the people and said that he would consume them. Moses prayed God to save them and to remember his promise to Abraham. God was intreated of him and called him upon the mountain again. There he took other tables of stone and wrote the ten commandments again.

These commandments constituted the covenant that God later abolished. Here is the proof as to what the covenant was: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words have I made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments" (Ex. 34: 26, 27). "And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire; ye heard the voice of the words but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. And He declared unto you His covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone" (Deut. 4: 11, 12). God first spoke the commandments. Then He wrote them upon two tables of stone. He called them the covenant. He said in the first place that He wrote the words of the covenant, the ten commandments. He said in the second place He declared His covenant which he commanded to perform, *even* ten commandments! That was the covenant. Don't forget that. God said so. He used the ten commandments in apposition with the word cov-

enant in the first place, thus identifying them as being absolutely the same. In the second He declared His covenant—even ten commandments! They are it! But later God abolished that very covenant! "What!" says one. "God destroyed that covenant that He Himself gave at Sinia?" Yes, as certainly as that He gave it. Then did God release one to steal, to bear false witness, to commit adultery, and so on? Certainly not. The strictly moral phases of that covenant were moral before God gave it and they have been moral—in the very nature of things—since He destroyed it. It was wrong to steal *before* the covenant was given at Mt. Sinai and it is wrong *since* it was taken out of the way when it was nailed to the cross of Calvary.

But this one Scripture on the latter point and I must pass on in the development of the plan of salvation. "And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock. * * * And I took my staff and even Beauty, and cut it asunder that *I might break my covenant* which I had made with all the people. And it was broken in that day and so the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord. And I said unto them, If he thinks good give me my price; and if not, forebear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord" (Zech. 11: 7-13). Was ever language plainer? Jesus Christ was valued at thirty pieces of silver. That was what Judas sold Him for. The money was cast in the house of the Lord. It was taken by the Jews, who would not take the price of blood into the house of the Lord, and bought the potter's field. Jesus was the shepherd's crook called Beatuy. Upon the cross of Calvary He was broken, cut asunder. There God said that He *broke His covenant* which He had made with *all* the people! Thus the sway of Mt. Sinai came to an abrupt termination at Calvary, just as the patriarchal age ended at Sinai. Progress was being made, according

to eternal purpose, down through the ages toward a definite goal—the redemption of the race of Adam. And as progress was being made many subsidiary things were used to bridge the four thousand years of the world, in round numbers, from Eden to the time of our Lord. As I said once before, if primary things are allowed to hold sway and all other things are forced into their proper places, there will be no final serious misintrepretation of the Scriptures. But do not forget that God with the eye of prescience was seeing Calvary over the comparatively low summit of Mt. Sinai in the promise made at the time of the first transgression: "He shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel." And when God called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees into a strange land and made a promise that in and through his seed should all the world be blessed He was seeing the rise of the Lord Jesus Christ and not Sinai where the law was "added" to the promise four hundred and thirty years after the promise was made. (See Gal. 3: 17.)

Slowly, majestically, movements august and unhurried by the miseries of tens of thousands and even millions, God let generations come and go, millenniums pass, and then one night to shepherds watching their flocks on the hills of Judea there was an announcement by Gabriel that meant the beginning of the end—the consummation of a purpose that involved ages, all the family of man, God and the eternal paradise of God. Jesus, "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption" (I Cor. 1: 30), the Emmanuel of God, was then reposing in a manger in the little town of Bethlehem. Angels in the skies above the shepherds' heads sang a diviner song than when the worlds were first formed. Now the Son of God, born of a woman, "in the likeness of sinful flesh," in His little red body, began inauspiciously a life that was to exert a greater influence than any life since the time of Adam, for he was the second Adam, "the Lord from heaven," come to restore that which was lost in the first place. Adam in Eden—Christ at Calvary! The antipodes—death and life!

If one wishes to familiarize himself with the record

of the Son of God, that can be readily done from the records God made of His Son in the first four Books of the New Testament. I can not dwell fully upon His life now. Space forbids.

The sins of the world had separated between the people and God. God gave substitutionary sacrifices for the sins of men in the offering of the bodies of animals for the patriarchal and the Jewish ages. But for sins there was no eternal satisfaction uptil Christ came. "He is the propitiation for our sins," said the apostle to the Gentiles. That is, he was the satisfaction for sins. God could not be satisfied with the blood of animals. Hence, in prophecy, God said, "Thou shalt see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." The soul of Jesus was in travail upon the cross when he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He poured out His soul unto death. His great aching heart was broken and His precious body bruised unto death upon the rugged cross of Calvary. And God, having refused to witness the scene of the redeeming work of His own blessed Son, had turned His back. Christ cried to the forsaking Father. The earth was clothed in darkness. The sun refused to witness the awful tragedy and there Jesus died for our sins. And God said for man in whose stead Jesus died, "It is enough. I am satisfied in the death of my Son who has voluntarily become the price for sins and has borne them in His own body on the tree. That will do. I will pardon sins and remember them no more forever—no, not while eternity's ages roll by. They are forgiven!"

Jesus is the Saviour of the world. He is Saviour of all ages of the world. His blood was shed for the patriarchs before the law and for the Israelites during the reign of the law. Hear the writer of the Hebrew letter: "That by means of death for the redemption (O blessed word that) of the transgressions that were under the first covenant (the covenant of the ten commandments), they who are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9: 15). "All promises in Him are yea and in Him amen to the glory of God by us." All promises are in Christ. In Him did those under the first covenant,

the covenant of the ten commandments, have redemption and the promise of eternal inheritance. Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world! The Saviour of Abraham, of Moses, of Aaron, of David. The Saviour of the whole world! The law of Moses should never be deified into the saving place and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. His blood alone redeems. And the whole scheme, wrought out with such elaborate, slow and deliberate care and pains must ever look to Him, and all obedience must have Him in view.

It is utterly impossible to discuss all the parts to the wonderful scheme of human redemption. But there is the same evidence of plan and purpose there as in nature, where again it would be impossible to discuss all the parts, or even name them, in one brief paper. Suffice it to say that every part is related to the Lord Jesus Christ and His expiating death on Calvary, just as in nature every part is related to every other part and the whole to a congruous plan. Jesus, "the sun of righteousness" is the center of the scheme of redemption as the sun is the center of this solar system.

1. God planned, when the first couple sinned, to save man. He was the original planner, or designer.

2. Jesus Christ purposed to enter into man's condition, thus prepare Himself to represent man's cause, to go between God and man and affect a reconciliation. He was the mediatorial cause. "For there is one God and one mediator between God and man—the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2: 5).

3. The Holy Spirit, the third person in the Godhead, became the revealing cause, for after the death and departure of our Lord from the apostles, Jesus had the Holy Spirit to come and to be their comforter and to bring all things to their minds whatsoever He had said unto them. (See Jno. 16: 13-25.) This was the work, the special, superior and distinct work which the Holy Spirit did beginning with the first Pentecost after the resurrection of our Lord. (See Acts, 2nd chapter.) Hence, the Holy Spirit was the third divine causation.

4. The Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ was the pro-

curing cause in man's redemption. "Without the shedding of blood was no remission" (Heb. 9: 15), but "it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." No. Only the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ could save. "Forasumch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I. Pet. 1: 18, 19).

5. The apostles were the instrumental agency or cause in men's redemption. They were appointed to treat with men and women and to offer redemption to all mankind as aliens. Hence they were called ambassadors for Christ. In the sermon first preached by them, the sermon recorded in the second chapter of Acts of Apostles, the sermon that for the first time in the history of the world offered complete forgiveness, in the name of Christ, of all sins, the apostles manifested the place and position that God had assigned them in the scheme of human redemption. They were the vessels and bearers of the message of salvation. What a lofty mission! And for that they had been intensively trained—trained as never were men trained before. They had been with the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God for three and one-half years day and night. In the crowded villages, on the lonely plains, by the sea, He had instructed them unto the kingdom of God. Then, not being satisfied, He had given them the Holy Spirit to safeguard their utterances and to have them say just what heaven wanted them to say in the momentous plan of saving the eternal spirits of men and women. What a work, indeed! "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ," said the apostle to the Gentiles.

6. The Gospel was the didactic and prescribing cause. It makes man to know his condition and the grace of God in contrast therewith. Jesus said for the apostles to go and to teach all nations. He said for them to go into all the world and to preach the Gospel to every creature. His commission of authority and commission of

duty upon them was most explicit. He said, "All authority is given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded you and, lo, I am with you alway; even unto the end of the world." "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be condemned." Where ever they should go from Jerusalem unto the uttermost parts of the earth their message was to be one and unchanging. It was to be the Gospel. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

7. Finally, faith exercised in the heart, would be the appropriating cause "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "He that believeth not is condemned already." "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever *believeth* on Him might have everlasting life." When the people on the first pentecost after the resurrction of Jesus heard, for the first time in the history of the world, the Gospel in its fullness offering from God complete forgiveness, Peter said to them, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ." Faith—faith in their hearts was required. Then, being cut to their hearts they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They believed. Coupled with that faith was this obedience, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit; for the promise is unto you and unto your children and to all that are afar off—even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Then here are the terms and the promise unto all that are afar off—even as many as the Lord our God shall call. As with the promises, so with the conditions—unto all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call! Are you called? Have you obeyed to enjoy the promises? "Thou knowest."

NEVER MAN SO SPAKE

NEVER MAN SO SPAKE

By Homer E. Moore

(Lesson: John 7: 25-52. Text: John 7: 46.

Jesus Christ stands in a class by Himself. In knowledge, wisdom, authority and love, He has no equal. The instance referred to in the text took place in Jerusalem about six months before Christ was put to death. At this time the Jews had become so mad at Him they determined to kill Him, lawfully or unlawfully, they seemed to care not. They had not always hated Him, for at one time they proposed to take Him by force and make Him king.

The Pharisees and chief priest send officers to arrest Him. As the officers approach they heard Jesus delivering the speech recorded in text. As we read the address there is nothing so striking to us, but there was something in the Saviour's manner or delivery that impressed these officers, and when they returned the only excuse they offered was, "Never man spake as this man."

1. ACQUAINTANCE WITH SCRIPTURE
Matt. 4: 1-4

In replying to the tempter Jesus spake as man never spoke. The tempter says, "If thou be the Son of God command these stones to be made bread." Jesus answered, "It is written man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." How true. Bread sustains the out man, but obedience to the Word of God leads to life eternal. The devil says, "If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; and in their hand they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." Jesus replies: "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." The devil misapplied the word of God

in a way to make it conflict with another passage. In the third temptation Jesus replied, "It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve." In order to meet temptation we should be familiar with the Word of God, hence the importance of daily study. We should have a "thus saith the Lord," for our course in life.

2. AUTHORITY

Never man spake with authority as Christ. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5th, 6th and 7th chapters) Jesus refers to the law of Moses on several points, and adds, "but I say unto you." At the close of this sermon the "people were astonished for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes."

3. WISDOM

Jesus spake with wisdom never equaled by man. In John 8: 1-11 we have an instance where the Jews tried to get Jesus to condemn a sinful woman. They wanted Him to pronounce the sentence of death which He had no right to do. They thought He would say she ought to be put to death according to the law of Moses. They were ready to execute the sentence. Their real aim was to get Christ in trouble with Cæsar, who alone had the right to pronounce death sentence.

He apparently hesitated to answer the question. He stooped down and wrote in the sand. They thought they had caught Him. They pressed Him to answer. He arose and speaking as man never spake, said: "He that is without sin among you, let him cast first a stone at her." He caused the accusers to remember their own sin. The place to begin in condemning sin or reforming the world is with self. If each individual would correct his life, the whole world would become pure.

In Matt. 22: 15-22 we find the Pharisees trying to entangle Him in his talk. They lay a plan to get Him in trouble with Cæsar. They send their young disciples and the Herodians to question Him. The question was: "Is it lawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, or not?" They "took counsel" in framing this question, and thought they

had one that would entangle Him, no difference how He answered. If He said it was right to pay tribute unto Cæsar every Jew would be against Him; if He said it was wrong, the Herodians would be against Him and report Him to Cæsar, and He would be in trouble. They complimented Him by saying, "Thou are true." but He showed them that He understood their motive by saying, "Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?" Jesus said: "Show me the tribute money." They brought unto Him a penny. He said, "Whose is this image and superscription?" They replied Cæsar's. Then speaking as man never spake, He said: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Neither Jews or Greek could take offense at this reply.

Cæsar will see to it that every man pays his tribute, but how many are rendering unto God what is due? God bestows more blessings on man than Cæsar does, but how many pays as much each year for the cause of Christ as they pay in taxes? Will man rob God?

CONCERNING THE RESURRECTION

As soon as the Pharisees had been put to silence the sadducers raised a question concerning the resurrection, Matt. 22: 23-33. As the Pharisees had never answered this question to the satisfaction of the Sadducees, they no doubt decided they were right and the Pharisees wrong on the question. The Sadducees seem to think that no seven men could live with one woman here on earth and have peace, and as peace will reign in heaven, therefore there would be no resurrection and future state.

But the Master replied by saying they were wrong in two respects, "Not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." The power of God that created us with the desire to marry can raise us from the dead without a desire to marry. The Scriptures say, God is the "God of Abraham." If Abraham be dead and there is nothing after death, then this Scripture would simply mean, God is the "God of nothing." This would be foolishness. Speaking as man never spake, Jesus silenced the Sadducees.

In Matthew 23rd chapter the Master spake with a severity that man "never so spake;" and also with a tenderness unknown to man, Matt. 23: 37-39.

He spake with evidence of divine power, Luke 23: 34, under the greatest suffering which man could endure, even unto death, He asks the Father to forgive His enemies. Here He shows one of His greatest qualifications of a king—truly the Prince of Peace. If that principle rules in the hearts of kings there would be no more war or earth.

The Master is going to speak once more in the future, as man never spoke. "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, under the resurrection of damnation" (John 5: 28, 29. "Before him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats;" and then in the swiftest notes that ever fell on the ear of man, He will say to those on His right hand, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." And in the saddest words ever uttered, He will say to those on the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Speaking as man never spoke, He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Dear reader, will you hear His voice and live?

THE CHURCH IN PROPHECY

THE CHURCH IN PROPHECY

By Bynum Black

Dear Friends: I think it a good thing to speak to you about the church for which Christ died, and I anticipate in advance your attention to what I have to say about this interesting subject. It is in keeping with apostolic example to base our remarks on a text, and my text will be found in the writings of the prophet Amos, chapter 3, verse 7, in which we read: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but that He revealeth His secrets unto his servants the prophets."

The Church of Christ is mentioned under many names in the Word of God, such as royal priesthood, holy nation, new man, flock, government, whole family, temple, kingdom of God, body, Zion, kingdom of God's dear Son, the Bride, house, the church. This divine institution had its beginning in the city of Jerusalem, in the year 33. God's prophets assure us that this government "shall never be destroyed" (Dan. 2: 44); that it will "endure throughout all generations" (Psa. 145: 13); "Of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1: 33); "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages" (Eph. 3: 21).

Within this divine institution the inspired apostles organized local assemblies, called by Paul "churches of Christ" (Rom. 16: 16). These were composed of men and women converted to the religion of our Lord Jesus by the preaching of the Gospel, leading each convert to obedience of the truth, thus purifying the soul (I Pet. 1: 22); "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2: 47). We read in the New Testament of the congregation, or local church at Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, the churches of Galatia and the seven churches of Asia. The apostles and early Fathers organized thousands of these local organizations

or churches of Christ. But a local church in any community is composed of men and women and all must die sooner or later, and unless new converts are brought in from time to time the congregation itself passes away. Therefore, all the early churches have long since passed and ceased to function as organized assemblies. It is agreed to by all that a man can be a member of the great family of God, the kingdom of Christ, the church in the sense Jesus used the term "church" in Matt. 16: 18, and not in a local church of Christ. In other words, if a preacher of the Gospel goes into a new field, where Christ has not been preached, and converts a man to the truth, and that man obeys from the heart that form of doctrine delivered him, he is then made free from sin, is born again, and is a citizen of the kingdom of Christ. Or, to change the illustration: If persecution, pestilence or war break up a congregation and disperse the members, and they scatter out into other fields, that does not place them in the kingdom of Satan. They are still in the kingdom of God; still members of the church of Christ. In the light of this fact we know that all the early congregations were disorganized, broken up and destroyed. Not one of the local churches we read about in the Word of God has survived.

While such local churches of Christ, founded by the apostles and the early Christian Fathers existed, they taught faith, repentance and baptism as conditions of admission into the kingdom. They came together upon the first day of the week to worship, taking the Lord's supper and giving of their earnings to care for the poor and have the Gospel preached to the lost. They were taught by the apostles to not neglect the assembling of themselves together. They continued "steadfastly" to keep house for the Lord. Not only do we read of such being what they taught as conditions of salvation and worship in New Testament times, but there was but little change, if any at all, for four hundred years. When John came to prepare a people for the Lord, we read in the latest translation, put out by the University of Chicago, a translation by the president of that institution,

that John preached the God-ordained way of preparing the material for the coming kingdom as follows: "John the baptizer, appeared in the desert, and preached repentance and baptism in order to obtain the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1: 4). Again we read in this latest version: "You must repent, and every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, in order to have your sins forgiven" (Acts 2: 38). It is evident from all the New Covenant teaches on the subject of baptism that the truth, as to the design of baptism, must sooner or later be admitted by all. Not only did the apostles so teach, but Barnabas, mentioned by name as Paul's associate (Acts 13: 2) taught: "We go down into the water, full of sins and polution, but come up again bringing forth fruit; having in our hearts the fear and hope of Jesus" (Orchard's History, Vol. I, page 12).

Justin Martyr wrote in the second century: "Such only are true believers, and have been baptized in the laver of regeneration for the remission of sins" (Same book, Vol. I, page 24).

Origen in the year 185, A. D., said: "He that is baptized unto salvation receives the water and the Spirit" (Same history, page 35).

Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, in the year 385, said: "If any one receive not baptism he can not be saved" (Same book, page 43).

Tertullian said in the fourth century: "Treating of the necessity of baptism, spoke of that necessity as absolute" (Wall's History, Vol. I, page 96).

Gregory, in the year 388 A. D., says: "In baptism there are three things which conduct us into the immortal life—Prayer, Water and Faith" (Orchard's History, Vol. I, page 44).

In the third century we read of baptism: "Remission of sins was thought to be its immediate and happy fruit" Mosheim, Vol. I, page 91).

As late as Novation's day we read of his remarks concerning baptism: "Pardon obtained for him by Christ, and appropriated to him by baptism" (Neander, Vol. 1, page 244).

Not only were the early congregations Scriptural on the design of baptism, but they continued to meet for worship on the first day of the week. Mosheim says: "It was a regular custom, at this period, for Christians to meet together for divine worship, to sing hymns to Christ, who was worshiped as God almost throughout the East; to exhort one another to abstain from evil, and to commemorate Christ's death; to observe the first day of the week, which was regarded by all Christians" (Mosheim, Vol. I, pages 91 and 109). Also as late as the latter part of the second century all congregations, like those planted by the apostles, had more than one elder (Orchard, page 109).

But, friends, as the centuries passed by, all this was changed. Paul turned prophet, in II Thes. 2, and saw the Man of Sin coming, who would exalt himself in the temple and take the power unto himself, declaring that he was the vicegerent of the Almighty. Daniel, the prophet, saw the same Man of Sin coming and declared that he would exalt himself even to the prince of the host; that he would cast down the truth to the ground and destroy the true worship (Dan. 8: 9-12).

The efforts of men to unite church and state brought on the Dark Ages. Wars and distress, suffering and death, was the sad lot of many thousands of the saints of God. This Beast, as he is called by John in Revelation, made war "with the saints and prevailed against them" (Dan. 7: 21). At the head of the chapter in bold type we read, "The Kingdom of Christ," Ezekiel 34, and find that the saints were to be "scattered" (Verse 5). "My sheep (Christians) wandered through all the mountains, and upon every hill; yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them" (Verse 6). Amos saw the same sad day. He as a prophet speaks out for God: "And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day" (Amos 8: 9).

When righteous men protested the reign of terror and the rising powers of the Man of Sin, they were impris-

oned, burned to the stake, their property was confiscated, their sacred Scriptures taken from them and made into bonfires. Then we see the fulfillment of Amos' prophecy, when in this same chapter, verses 11 and 12, he said there would at this time be a great famine in the land, not a famine for bread, nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the Lord. He tells of God's saints who "Shall wander from sea to sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it." The sun had gone down at noon and the Dark Ages now brooded over the earth in the long papal night which has cursed the world. The great "Falling away" had come that Paul in his prophecy had seen as the approaching calamity came upon the world (II Thes. 2: 3). Men who loved the truth better than life were being sacrificed to this abomination of the ages. The true followers of the Christ had to seek refuge in the mountains, in caves, in wilderness. The congregations (churches of Christ, as Paul calls them, Romans 16: 16) were destroyed. The children of the kingdom were now "scattered" and the earth was darkened in the clear day, and the sun had gone down at noon. Just where I, a while ago, quoted from the prophet Daniel (chapter 8), he had informed us that the truth would be cast down by this evil "prince of the host," as he exalted himself, and that he would practice and prosper. How true! But let me quote the next verse: "Then I heard one saint speaking to another saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?" (Verse 13). The next verse gives the answer: "Unto two thousand and three hundred days." But this is prophetic, and God names a day for a year, as all agree. "I have appointed thee each day for a year" (Ezk. 4: 6); "Each day for a year" (Numbers 14: 34).

All Bible readers know that Daniel was here interpreting the vision of King Nebuchadnezzar. So we go back to Dan. 4: 16 and find that seven times passed over the king previous to the time of Daniel's interpretation.

A time is twenty-four hours, and twenty-four hours is one day. The seven days in prophecy is exactly seven years, and so by keeping up with the reign of the kings, during the interim down till we come to chapter nine, sure enough, we find it seven years. And in the ninth chapter we get our bearings so as to secure the date. In the 26th verse we read: "And after three score and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off." So from the time this certain decree went forth it would be sixty-two weeks until the cutting off or crucifying of our Saviour. This is prophecy and would be as many days as there are in sixty-two weeks. In the four hundred and thirty-four prophetic days we have that many years. The seven years from the time of Nebuchadnezzar's vision and this four hundred and thirty-four would be 441. Subtracting the 441 from 2,300 leaves us the year of our Lord 1859. But we had to secure this date from the crucifixion, whereas we date from the birth of the Redeemer. He was full thirty-three years of age at the time He was crucified and everlasting righteousness was brought in. Then by taking the difference between His birth and death we have the date 1826. Here we will drive a stake and go back to the prophecy I have quoted from Ezekiel, headed the "Kingdom of Christ," in which we heard the prophet say that the "sheep" or saints of the Lord would be "scattered."

Now we quote the 12th verse of that chapter (chapter 34), and it is a promise which thrills the soul: "Thus saith the Lord God I will both search my sheep, and seek them out . . . . and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day." Just as the previous scattering of God's saints broke up the congregations, so now to "gather" them will mean nothing short of effecting the organization of congregations. The independence of the local congregations is a fact not to even be questioned of the churches of Christ in apostolic times. In the first half of the nineteenth century wise and good men saw the divided state of the religious world and sought to effect local congre-

gational worship, being careful not to organize an additional ecclesiasticism.

This great movement, as it is sometimes called, was taking on form from the beginning of the century. Hear one of the most bitter enemies the cause has ever had: "It started out in a movement of which Alexander Campbell was the recognized head; and it started in America, and became a church about 1827" (Ray, in Ray-Lucas Debate, page 118). This same declaration has been made ten thousand times from pulpit and press by those who have opposed the work. But Campbell, Scott, Stone and other great and good men, were only servants of our blessed Lord and claimed to be the head of nothing; men who gave their lives in calling the people out of Babylon, teaching the truth so long obscured and "cast down to the ground" (Dan. 8: 12). They preached the same doctrine as taught by the Christ and His inspired apostles. They only recognized local congregations, or churches of Christ, as they were called by Paul (Romans 16: 16), and taught the saints of God to worship as in the apostolic age. "Surely the Lord will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets."

Some honest hearer possibly thinks that the dates set forth are too obscure, and if true profane history would furnish us a clue to reach similar dates. We will now look and see what confirmation we can find, if any, in the annals of the history of the wars that really ushered in the Man of Sin, the throttling of religious liberty and the "scattering" of the children of God. But we must necessarily be brief.

In your Encyclopedia you will find the history of the wars of the "White Prince," or Belitzer, who with his conquering hosts marched through Italy while city after city fell. At last on December 10, 536, the city of Rome fell into his hands. The dark days of the rule of the Man of Sin were by this triumph accelerated. The Catholic Hierarchy from this time forth had all but universal rule over the known world. Indeed, the sun had now gone down at noon and the earth was darkened (Amos 8: 9).

The true worship was destroyed and the "truth was cast down to the ground" (Dan. 8: 12). The church now borne on the wings of a great eagle fled into the wilderness (Rev. 12: 6-14). The long, dark night had come! Daniel tells us when the "little horn waxed great even to the hosts of heaven," and magnified himself even to the prince of the host and destroyed the place of his sanctuary and cast the truth to the ground, that he practiced and prospered. In the next verse the prophet tells us he heard one saint in that terrible time ask another how long the time would be. Here are the exact words: "Then I heard one saint speaking, and another saint said unto that certain saint that spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot?"

Take the answer to this as recorded in Dan. 12: 11: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." This is the prophecy and the Lord names a day for a year. Take the year given, 536, A. D., and add the 1,290 years and we have the answer found before—1826. At this very date tens of thousands of people were being taught by different men in different places, without even the slightest knowledge of the existence of each other, that the time had come for all who had faith in the ancient order of things to come and take their stand on the Bible and the Bible alone. Hundreds of congregations were organized, teaching the same Gospel and worshiping in the same way the apostles and ancient Fathers had taught and worshiped. In ancient time the followers of the Christ were known as "Christians," and Orchard's History says, "They held the name Christian, and had strong aversions to any other" (Vol. I, page 12).

No other religious movement in the world has the characteristics of the true church. It is identical in the simple plan of salvation from sins, the local congregations with no denominational connections, but independent in organization; Scriptural in worship; a plurality of

elders to each local church; ever holding to the name Christian with "strong aversions to any other;" the going into obscurity, Dark Ages, Wilderness—on the wings of a great eagle—a figure of speech which our Lord used to teach that the true church could not be tracked (Rev. 12: 6-14); the coming out in the last time, the evening light (Zech. 14: 7), and exactly the time foretold by the prophets of the Lord.

Glorious church of our Redeemer and King!

All praise to our great Head—the heavenly groom!
For ever we hope to live, His praises to sing,
And be ready to meet Him, for He is coming soon!

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THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS WORK

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND HIS WORK

By W. B. McVey

For many years I have known that there is a very great difference among those who claim to be religious, relative to the Holy Spirit and his work. I have given the subject much earnest thought. I will as briefly as possible give the results of my investigations.

I first learned by reading the Word of God that there is a Holy Spirit. (Gen. 1: 2.) I have no intention of discussing the individuality of the Holy Spirit, but the great work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of man. All I know about the Spirit's work in the salvation of man I learn from the Holy Scriptures. I believe any one who will divest himself of all human ideas and be anxious to know the truth, can and will get the truth. I think it will help all to know first that God is a being that talks, also that the Holy Spirit talks. God made man a being that talks. In the garden God talked to man, told him what he had liberty to do, and what he should not do. Man did not obey God, and had to leave the garden; this we learn from the inspired Word of God, the Bible. Man for his disobedience not only had to leave the garden, but was destined to die. Now, without something on the part of God, man would be without a hope of the future. We learn from the New Testament that God had a way called the eternal purpose of God. "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3: 11.) God's eternal purpose in due time was made known. One thing needful for us, is for us to know how, when, and by whom made known, and what there is in it for us, and how we obtain it.

To understand the Holy Spirit's work we go back to the time that Adam and his wife had to leave their Eden home. In that age of the world's history, God gave to man a system of worship, which when obeyed looked future

to Christ for all that God has promised to all who obey Him. "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (II Cor. 1: 20). The law of Moses could not give life. "Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal. 3: 21).

The promised inheritance of all, in all ages of the world, is in Christ through His blood. "And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9: 15). We have enough before us now to see that all in every age of the world, who obtain salvation, obtain it through Christ, through His blood. But for us to enjoy salvation in Christ, through His blood, there is a work for the Holy Spirit. We have stated that God talks. After man had sinned, how did God talk to man? "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets" (Heb. 1: 1). How did God speak by the prophets? "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Peter 1: 21). It would be useless for me to think of citing all that the prophets spake. It is enough to know that it was the Holy Spirit's work to speak through the prophets. When we read the Old Testament prophets, or what they spake we should keep before our minds that their words were the words of God, given by the Holy Spirit. The things spoken by the Holy Spirit, through the prophets, that related to man's salvation, was not understood until explained by the Holy Spirit, as we have his explanation in the New Testament; which will become more apparent as we proceed with the subject.

I now cite a number of Scriptures to show that God's plan was so deep in prophetic statements, as God gave them by the Holy Spirit, that no created intelligence, or being, could grasp them; no, not even the angels. "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou

unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto them it is not given" (Matt. 13: 10, 11; Mark 4: 10, 11; Luke 8: 9, 10). The Holy Spirit, through the prophets, had spoken of a kingdom that God would set up. There were mysteries about the future kingdom, spoken of by the all-knowing Spirit of God, in such high degrees of intelligence, that no created intelligence could understand. It is not my object to cite the Scriptures that speak of the kingdom, but to the great work of the Holy Spirit; because I am sure that the greatest lack of understanding, of all things, is in reference to the Holy Spirit and His work.

I must cite other Scriptures that speak of the hidden things of God. "Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my Gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of mystery which was kept secret since the world began" (Rom. 16: 25). "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known of it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Cor. 2: 7, 8). Paul in I Cor. 2: 9, cites Isa. 64: 4: "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

There are other Scriptures which will come into our investigation of this subject which will increase our conception of the greatness of the Holy Spirit's work. If all the created could be molded into one intelligence, then unaided by the all-knowing Spirit of God the mysteries of God's purpose could not be known.

If such intelligence could go into the great field of words and select the sweetest and most descriptive words and weave them into beautiful sentences, as sweet as the kisses of the morning, then apart from the Holy Spirit's work all would be but dross. If angels with the swiftness of heaven's lightnings, with pens of gold, in ink as bright as the light, should write as with the clearness of the

sunbeams, all would be inadequate to portray the redemptive plan. We can hope for nothing from man, for the words of the Spirit say: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2: 14). The natural man is any, or all men. Men had to be inspired by the Holy Spirit to know the things of the Spirit of God. The apostles were inspired. Not the preachers of today. Please don't confuse matters at this point by saying that the natural man can not receive the Spirit. Paul says he can not receive the things of the Spirit of God. I hope that the reader may be able to see the great measure of the Spirit given to the prophets, which was peculiar to them.

We now speak of the Lord Jesus Christ. "For whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him" (John 3: 34). Christ, having the Spirit without measure, knew all that had been spoken by the Spirit through the prophets in passed ages. He was enabled to speak as never man spake. The works He did caused men to know that He was a teacher sent from God. "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (John 3: 1, 2). Time would not permit me to speak of all that which our Lord Jesus, both began to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up; after that He, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandment unto the apostles whom He had chosen. But I will say that all that Jesus knew, said, did and commanded was by the unlimited measure of the Spirit. We must have the Spirit of Christ to be His, but not the Spirit without measure. I hope as we view the work of the prophets, and the like work of Christ, that we begin to form some conception of the Holy Spirit and His work. Jesus said that a man had to be born again, or he could not see the kingdom of God. (John 3: 3.) Notice His teaching in the fifth verse, and

believe it: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." While the new birth seems to be difficult for some to understand, the way to understand (if the language of Jesus can not be understood) is to believe the teaching of the Holy Spirit. But why should any one doubt the teaching of Jesus? The Holy Spirit had a great work to do on the earth, but while Jesus was here the Spirit would not come. Hear Jesus: "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you" (John 16: 17). "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)." (John 7: 37, 38, 39.) It is as plain as words, the words of Jesus can make it that the Holy Spirit had not come, and would not come while Jesus was here on earth, the reason is given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. Christ was not glorified until He went back home to His Father. Hear Christ: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17: 5). At this point we have the clearness of daylight.

I now cite John 14: 15, 16, 17: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Christ here spake to His apostles, and this Scripture is applicable to His apostles only. He had been their Comforter, He was going away, and on the conditions that they would keep His commandments, they would receive another Comforter. It is plain at this point that the Comforter had not yet come. The measure of the Holy Spirit here named was to the apostles only, and

was a measure the world could not receive. Please don't perplex matters at this point, by saying, as some do: "Then the children of God can not receive the Spirit." If this same measure (the Comforter) is for us, we must receive it on the same conditions that the apostles did. They had been baptized, and had to love Jesus and keep His commandments. The Comforter came in answer to Christ's prayer, and His prayer only. Remember that Jesus said: "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world can not receive." By the world is meant all other people. The Spirit accomplished His greatest work when He came to the apostles as another Comforter: He consummated God's great redemptive plan; it was effected by the Holy Spirit through the apostles of Christ; we have it in the New Testament Scriptures.

Notice what the Comforter, the Holy Spirit was to do. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14: 26). The Holy Spirit had not yet come. The Father was to send Him to the apostles, in the name of Christ. He was to teach the apostles all things. He did, and we have His teaching in the New Testament. There is no lack of knowledge if we will read and believe the teaching of the Holy Spirit. We should not, at this point, minimize the work of the Holy Spirit with our feelings. We should not magnify our feelings so as to falsely and ignorantly claim to be equal with the apostles of Jesus. We should not give Jesus the lie, by claiming that measure of the Holy Spirit promised to the apostles.

Jesus said, the world can not receive it. Our lack of knowledge stands and will stand forever against us, if we go forth with such a false claim. Yes, it will condemn, if we go with such a false claim on our lips and in our hearts. Jesus said to His apostles: "The Holy Spirit shall bring to your remembrance all things whatsoever I have said unto you." His promise at this point was applicable to the apostles only. Jesus had taught them many precious truths; it was not possible for them

to remember all that Jesus had said to them. The Holy Spirit knew all that Jesus had said, and refreshed the apostles' mind with the teaching of Jesus. The apostles, by the power of the Holy Spirit, gave us in the New Testament the teaching of Jesus. Such a measure of the Holy Spirit is not applicable to us. Man today might just as well claim to be the Creator, as to claim the measure of the Holy Spirit given to the apostles. We never heard the voice of Jesus; we have His teaching, given by the Holy Spirit through the apostles. The Holy Spirit does not bring to our remembrance the teaching of Jesus. Too absurd.

Again, hear Jesus: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (John 15: 26, 27). The Spirit had not been given at that time. The Spirit of which mention is made here was to the apostles. The Spirit was to testify of Christ. The apostles also were to testify of Christ because they had been with Him from the beginning. In the New Testament we have the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and of the apostles. It is for us to believe. No man today can read John 15: 26, 27, and adduce an argument that would have the semblance of proof that this Scripture is applicable to him. Hear Jesus: "Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" (John 16: 13). The Spirit of Truth had not come, but they were nearing his coming. Here we learn that the Spirit could both hear and speak. To whom was He to speak? To the apostles of Christ. What was He to speak? That which He heard of the Father. The Spirit was not to speak of Himself; he had to speak that which He heard of the Father. The apostles spake as the Spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2: 4; Matt. 10: 19, 20. If the apostles could speak only as the Holy Spirit spake through them, how dare men today to speak presumptuously as

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they do? Men today speak presumptuously, doing that which the Holy Spirit would not do; and even denying the Word of God. John 16: 13, was applicable to the apostles only. The Holy Spirit did guide the apostles into all truth, teaching them whatsoever He heard of the Father. We, to be right, must be like the Thessalonicans: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received not the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (I Thes. 2: 13). It should be apparent to all Bible readers that John 16: 13 was applicable to the apostles only. No man now living can make this Scripture fit his case. That that should guide us into all truth we have from God, from the Holy Spirit, from the apostles of Jesus Christ, in the New Testament. The place where the apostles received the Spirit, we learn by reading Luke 24: 49: "And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

The apostles were to tarry in Jerusalem; not people of today. The apostles were endued with power from on high, not preachers of today. "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8). The power here promised would enable the apostles to execute the great commission. Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16. The apostles, after the ascension of Jesus, returned to Jerusalem. Acts 2: 12. Before we notice what is said relative to His coming, or at His coming, we must see what He was to do for the world. "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and you see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged"

(John 16: 7-11). Here we find three things that the Spirit was to do for the world, viz.:

1. Reprove or convince the world of sin because they believed not on Christ.

2. Convince of righteousness, because Jesus went to His Father, and they saw Him no more.

3. Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Before we cite the Scripture that tells us when, where and how the Holy Spirit came, we drop back to bring up a few more Scriptures, which had their fulfillment at the same time. Matt. 3: 11; Mark 4: 8; Luke 3: 16; John 1: 33; Acts 1: 5. The last Scripture cited, speaking of the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit, was for or to the apostles.

The next Scripture we cite will tell us of the Spirit's coming, when He came, where He came, how He came and to whom He came.

We have found from the teaching of Jesus that the Holy Spirit, at His coming, was to do the most *stupendous* work that has ever been accomplished in any age of time. Our interests are so great that we should divest ourselves of all humanisms, and with every power and interest of our existence, see the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit, in unfolding the deep and hidden things of God, fulfilling the promises of Jesus in coming to His apostles as another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, which the world can not receive, teaching them all things, bringing all things that Jesus had said unto them to their remembrance, testifying of Jesus, enabling the apostles who had been with Jesus from the beginning to testify of Jesus, guiding the apostles into all truth, speaking to the apostles that which He heard of the Father, giving them power to do the works that Jesus had done and greater works. We must not lose sight of that which the Holy Spirit was to do for us. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them

cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2: 1, 2, 3, 4). How any man today can read this Scripture and call it up to prove that he has been baptized with the Holy Spirit, I can not see. Yet I know they do. I have put a great many to the test, and every one has failed.

Some time ago I was in conversation with a Methodist preacher and two other men. The preacher said he had been baptized with the Holy Spirit. I read to him Acts 2: 1, 2, 3, 4. I asked a few questions. Did you hear a sound from heaven as of a mighty, rushing wind? His answer was, no. Did it fill the house where you were sitting? No. Did there appear unto you cloven tongues like as of fire? No. Nothing sat upon you like cloven tongues of fire? No. Were you filled with the Holy Spirit so you could speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave you utterance? No. I asked him how he could claim the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit, and at the same time admit that he did not receive a single thing that the apostles did on the day of Pentecost. Did he answer? Not yet.

A few nights ago I was in conversation with a man who claimed the baptismal measure of the Holy Spirit. I asked him the same questions that I asked the preacher. His answer was, no. I asked him many questions. His answer came not. I will give a few: Did you receive the Spirit of Truth which the world can not receive? Did you receive it while you were in the world to make you a child of God? Did the Spirit teach you all things? Did the Spirit bring to your remembrance things that Jesus had said unto you? Can you testify of Christ, because you were with Him from the beginning? Did the Spirit guide you into all truth? Did the Spirit speak to you that which He heard of the Father? Did the Spirit show you things to come? Did the Spirit give you power to do the works that Jesus did, and greater works?

I now cite II Cor. 3: 6. Here, Paul speaking of the apostles, says they were made "able ministers of the New

Testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. The letter was the law of Moses. The spirit here is the New Testament. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away." V. 7. Here the old law, the law of Moses, was called the ministration of death. Paul says it was glorious. Notice what he says about the ministration of the spirit. "How shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious." V. 8. The law given by Moses was called the ministration of condemnation, and the law given by the Spirit is called the ministration of righteousness, and is greater in glory. "For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory." V. 9. The work of the Holy Spirit in giving the New Testament, was much greater than that of Moses in giving the Old Testament. "For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect by reason for the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." V. 10, 11. The point I wish to make is this: No man today will claim a manifestation equal to the giving of the law of Moses, but some will claim a manifestation much greater, equal to the Spirit's work in giving through the apostles the ministration of righteousness, the ministration of the Spirit. The apostles received the Spirit that they might know of God, because there was no other way to know of God. "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2: 11). Here we learn that the Spirit only knew the things of God. The things of God were not known prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit. "But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 2: 9). Paul here cites that which is written in Isa. 64: 4. The Spirit of God knew the things of God, and made the things of

God known to, through the apostles. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." V. 10. In the same verse, Paul says: "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." Here we learn that the work of the Spirit was to search and reveal the deep things of God, things spoken by the prophets, so deep and hidden, that angels could not look into them. "Which things the angels desire to look into" (I Peter 1: 12). The prophets through whom God spake by His Spirit did not know what, or what manner of time the Spirit signified. "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." The Holy Spirit spake through the prophets of the deep and hidden things of God. The same Spirit gave the signification of the deep and hidden things of God to the apostles. "Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, which things the angels desired to look into" (I Peter 1: 10, 11, 12). Peter says they are reported unto you by them who have preached the Gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. The apostles were commanded to preach, to go and preach the Gospel to all nations, every creature. Christ gave the command by, or through the Holy Spirit. "The former treatise have I made, O Theophi-lus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghost, had given commandment unto the apostles whom he had chosen" (Acts 1: 1, 2). Here is the command: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. 28: 19, 20). "Go ye into all the world and preach

the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16: 15, 16). The apostles did preach the Gospel to every creature. "If ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven, whereof I, Paul, am made a minister" (Col. 1: 23). Through the Holy Spirit, Christ gave the command to the apostles to preach the Gospel. With the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, the apostles preached the Gospel. In the Scriptures we learn of God's work for four thousand years, prior to the coming of Christ His work, which related to man's salvation. During that long period of time God talked to the people through the prophets. The prophets, in speaking, were moved by the Holy Ghost. The prophets did not understand all that the Holy Spirit spake through them. Christ came into this world to do His part in the salvation of man; the Spirit was not given by measure to him. He had the Spirit without measure, and by the Spirit he knew and understood all that the prophets had said in the Old Testament. He spake as never man spake. The works that Jesus did had never been witnessed before by man.

When the Holy Spirit came for his part of the work in the salvation of man, He came to the apostles. He came to clarify all things, and he did it so perfectly that any man who would speak a word against Him would commit a sin unpardonable. In His work He revealed to the apostles the meaning of the things that He had moved the prophets to speak. He made clear the promises of God. He showed the meaning of the types. He brought back to the apostles' minds what Jesus had said to them. He gave the apostles power to do the works that Jesus did, and greater works. He came to the apostles as another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, which the world can not receive. He came to testify of Jesus. He gave the apostles who had been with Jesus from the beginning power to testify of Christ. Without the Holy Spirit's testimony no man could say that Jesus is Lord;

His works, which He did through the apostles, and His revelations are so great that we recognize Christ as Lord. The Spirit taught the apostles all things. He guided them into all truth. The Holy Spirit revealed the New Testament through the apostles. The apostles had the ministry of reconciliation, they had the word of reconciliation; they were ambassadors for Christ. "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to-wit: that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them: and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5: 18, 19, 20).

On the day of Pentecost, the day that the Holy Spirit came and begun His work, through the apostles, the murderers of Jesus were convinced of sin. Jesus said the Spirit would convince the world of sin; He did what Jesus said He would do. The Spirit convinced of righteousness. Those who were convinced of sin asked: "What shall we do?" The Holy Spirit, speaking through the apostles, said, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2: 38). In verse 41, we have the first day's work of the Holy Spirit, in convincing of sin and righteousness. Then they that gladly received His word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The word they heard was the word of Peter, as the Spirit gave him utterance. Now, as the Holy Spirit started His work in the salvation of man, we should see what He did and how He did it. Those who received the Spirit were those who obeyed. "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5: 32).

How did they receive the Spirit in the days of the apostles, while the Holy Spirit was revealing and confirming the word? First, we will notice how the word

was confirmed. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?" (Heb. 2: 3, 4). The apostles were the ones that heard Him (Jesus), and by the apostles the word was confirmed, and the Scripture cited tells how and to whom the word was confirmed. How did those who obeyed the Gospel receive the Spirit? "He, therefore, that ministereth to you the Spirit and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3: 5). The apostles were the ones who worked miracles and ministered to them the Spirit. To whom did they minister the Spirit, and how? "But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now, when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money" (Acts 8: 12-18). In the 12th verse we learn who the preacher was, what he preached, and what both men and women believed and did. In verse 13, we learn that Simon believed and was baptized. In verse 14, we learn that both men and women, in believing and being baptized, received the word of God. In verse 15, we learn that Peter and John prayed for those who had been baptized, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. In verse 16, we learn that the Holy Spirit had fallen upon none of them, only they had been baptized in the name of

the Lord Jesus. In verses 17 and 18, we learn that they received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the apostles' hands. Philip had a miracle-working measure of the Holy Spirit, but not great enough to impart miracle-working power to others. The apostles only could impart such power given them by the Holy Spirit. Paul had that power. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied" (Acts 19: 6). "Wherefore, I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (II Tim. 1: 6). "For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established" (Rom. 1: 11).

The Holy Spirit through the apostles, by the laying on of the apostles' hand gave nine gifts. "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom (1); to another the word of knowledge by the same spirit (2); to another faith by the same Spirit (3); to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit (4); to another the working of miracles (5); to another prophecy (6); to another discerning of Spirits (7); to another divers kinds of tongues (8); to another interpretation of tongues (9)" (I Cor. 12: 8, 9, 10).

The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost Day, and at the house of Cornelius in miraculous, supernatural manifestations without laying on of hands. The apostles had been baptized before they received the Holy Spirit. At the house of Cornelius they received the Holy Spirit before they were baptized.

We now invite attention to the coming of the Spirit at the house of Cornelius. In Acts 10: 44, we learn that the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. In verse 45 we learn that, what they received was called "The gift of the Holy Ghost." In verse 46 we learn that "The gift of the Holy Ghost," which they received, was power to speak with tongues, and magnify God. In verse 47 we learn that they (Gentiles) received the Holy Ghost as well as we (Jews). In Acts 11: 15 Peter said: "The Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." In

verse 17, Peter said God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. What was the gift received at the beginning? Power to speak with other tongues. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2: 4). What is the power to speak with tongues called? The gift of the Holy Ghost. What were tongues for? "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not" (I Cor. 14: 22). When the power was given by the Holy Spirit to Cornelius to speak with other tongues, was it a sign to Cornelius of anything? Not unless he was an unbeliever, because tongues are a sign to them that believe not. Could the manifestation of the Holy Spirit which Cornelius received have been a sign of Cornelius' conversion? Not unless an unbeliever was converted. Was the manifestation of the Spirit which Cornelius received a sign that he was saved? Not unless an unbeliever was saved. Did Cornelius receive the Spirit to save him? No. Peter was to tell him what to do to be saved. "He will tell thee what thou oughtest to do" (Acts 10: 6). "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11: 14). Did Cornelius receive the Spirit to give him faith? No. The Gentiles heard the Gospel and believed. "Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the Gospel, and believe" (Acts 15: 7). Did Cornelius receive the Holy Spirit to purify his heart? No. "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15: 9). Did Cornelius receive the Spirit to cleanse him from sin? No. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1: 7). Can people receive the same sign today? No. Why is it that people can not receive the Spirit in the same way? Because tongues have ceased. "Whether there be tongues, they shall cease" (I Cor. 13: 8). Can people who received not the Spirit as the apostles did at Pentecost prove by Acts 2: 1-4 that they received the Holy Spirit? No. Can people who received

not the Spirit as Cornelius did prove that they receive the Spirit, by Acts 10: 44, 45, 46? No. A man might just as well try to prove that he took a drink of water by Jesus walking on the water. God's object in giving Cornelius such a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Spirit is clear, and can be seen in that which was accomplished. The miraculous gift given to Cornelius was the gift of tongues, the like gift, the gift of the Holy Ghost, a sign to unbelievers. The Jews were the unbelievers; they did not believe that the Gentiles had any right to obey the Gospel.

It took a miracle at Joppa to convince Peter; the Spirit told Peter to go, doubting nothing. "While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them" (Acts 10: 19, 20). Hear what Peter said to Cornelius. "And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean" (Acts 10: 28). Peter had six brethren with him. "And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house" (Acts 11: 12). After Peter had rehearsed the matter the Jews were convinced that the Gentiles had a right to obey the Gospel; the Spirit had accomplished God's purpose. "When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life" (Acts 11: 18). God's people today receive the Spirit, but they do not receive the measure of the Spirit without measure, like Christ did; they do not receive the measure that the apostles did; they do not receive the miracle-working measure that was given the first Christians by the laying on of the apostles' hands. I will notice later the measure that belongs to God's people now. The Holy Spirit in the days of the apostles directed the preacher, in a supernatural way. The Spirit bade Peter to go to Cornelius. The Spirit directed Philip.

"Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot" (Acts 8: 29). Read on to the close of the chapter. "And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8: 39). The Spirit's directions for us are in the New Testament. The Holy Spirit revealed the truth through inspired men. We can read the truth revealed by the Spirit in the New Testament. The miracle-working power that the apostles had was to confirm the word. Mark 16: 20; Heb. 2: 3, 4. The miracle-working measure that was given by the laying on of the apostles' hand was to establish those whom spiritual gifts were imparted. Rom. 1: 11. The revealed Gospel remains, and is God's power to save. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1: 16, 17). The miracle-working power was not to save, but to confirm the word, the Gospel.

Paul, in the twelfth chapter of first Corinthians, after telling about the nine spiritual gifts, says I will show unto you a more excellent way. "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (I Cor. 12: 31). If we should admit that you receive those gifts; all of them, yet it is true that there is a more excellent way. Those who claim to have those gifts, and rely on them for salvation go down at this point. Their claim is not true. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (I Cor. 13: 1, 2). Those supernatural gifts ceased. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophesies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away" (I

Cor. 13: 8). A. D. 59. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians the perfect revelation was not all given, they only knew in part. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part." V. 9. When the full, perfect revelation was given those gifts ceased. "But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." V. 10. Now we know what was done away, we want to know what remains. "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." V. 13. What is the faith? "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." "But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. 3: 23, 25). "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). The faith was revealed. The Gospel was revealed; the faith is the Gospel. There is one faith. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4: 5). There is one unchangeable Gospel. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1: 8, 9).

What is faith? Faith is the belief of the truth. "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thes. 2: 13). Faith comes by hearing God's word. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10: 17). We can't please God without faith. "But without faith it is impossible to please him" (Heb. 11: 6). "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14: 23). For anything to be of faith it must be of God's Word. Our walk is by faith. "For we walk by faith, not by sight" (II Cor. 5: 7). Faith only will not save. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2: 17, 26). Our faith to avail must work by love. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5: 6).

What is hope? "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for" (Rom. 8: 24). Our hope is in the Gospel. "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from hope of the Gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I, Paul, am made a minister" (Col. 1: 23). Our hope comes through the Scriptures. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15: 4). Our hope is in Christ. "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope" (I Tim. 1: 1). The hope is set before us. "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail" (Heb. 6: 18, 19). So we see our hope is set before us; it is in Christ, through the Gospel, revealed in the Scriptures. The Gospel must be obeyed. "And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thes. 1: 7, 8).

What is charity? Charity is love. What is love? "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man loves me, he will keep my words" (John 14: 23). "He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." V. 24. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (I John 2: 4). "For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments"

(I John 5: 3). Where, and how do we receive the measure of the Spirit that is for us, and what is it? In the Church is where we receive the Spirit. "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2: 21, 22). The Spirit is given to the sons of God. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4: 6). The measure of the Spirit that we receive is a fruit-bearing measure. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law" (Gal. 5: 22, 23). "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth" (Eph. 5: 9). The false is known by its fruits. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matt. 7: 15, 16). The true man of God is known by the fruit that he bears. "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matt. 7: 17, 18). The measure of the Spirit which we have, the apostles, and the Christians in their day who had the miracle-working measure, had to have the same measure which we have. But we do not receive the miraculous which they had.

I will not go on with the many Scriptures that speak of the indwelling Spirit; but I will mention one more Scripture. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8: 16). We should notice that Paul does not say that the Spirit beareth witness to our spirits, but with our spirits. When it was a question between the Jews and the apostles, or in their day as who were the children of God, the Spirit bore witness with the apostles' spirit that they were the children, the children of God. How does the Spirit now bear witness with our spirits that we are the children of

God? The Spirit has told us what to do to become the children of God. If we know what the Spirit said for us to do to become the children of God, and we do it, we know that we have done that which the Spirit said for us to do. The Spirit said for us to hear. Hearing is a command from God. He commanded us to hear His Son. Matt. 17: 5. Hearing is God's drawing power to bring men to Christ. John 6: 44, 45. Men and women must hear to become the children of God. If we have heard as we are commanded, the Spirit, and our spirit bear witness with each other. The Spirit says faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Rom. 10: 17. If we hear God's Word and believe it our spirits and the Holy Spirit are together. The Spirit said for all men to repent. Acts 17: 30. If we have repented we have obeyed the Spirit. The Spirit commanded to be baptized. Acts 2: 38. Gal. 3: 27. If we have done all that the Spirit said for us to do to become the children of God, the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirits that we are the children of God: because the Spirit revealed that which we must do to become the children of God, and we have done all we were commanded to do to become the children of God. The Holy Spirit says we are the children of God. Our spirits say we are the children of God, because we have obeyed. To be led by the Spirit is to do that which the Spirits says for us to do. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8: 14).

In conversion, many claim that the Holy Spirit operates independent of the written Word, on the sinner's heart by a direct impact, naked Spirit operating upon naked spirit. If their claim is true, it should be believed by all. The Scriptures say, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4: 1). We can not be true to God's Word in believing every spirit; it would not do to believe the teaching of all, because there are many false prophets (teachers); we are commanded to try the spirits. We can try the spirits; God has given a way, or rule, by which to try them. It would be an impossible task if we had no infallible rule

by which to try the spirits. The Word of God is the rule, the infallible rule. Those who claim that the Holy Spirit operates in the conversion of a sinner independent of the written Word can not go to the Word to prove their claim is independent of the written Word of God. Their proof is in their experience. We should not be hasty in denying their experience; it is, I think, safer to admit their experience. Their experience is no proof that they are right, but that they are wrong. I cite II Thess. 2: 10, 11: "Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

I wish to be kind, I feel sad for those who are deluded. I write hoping to do some poor, deluded soul good. "The truth" is the Word of God. John 17: 17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth." We must love the truth, the Word of God, to be saved. It is made plain in the Scripture cited II Thess. 2: 10, 11, 12 that those who received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, received from God and experience, a strong delusion. It is right on the part of God that such people should receive a strong delusion, and believe a lie and be damned. It may seem harsh, but we must believe the Word of God, or be in the same sad condition. People who will not believe the Word of God, the word of Jesus, of the Holy Spirit, yet claim to be right, having a very great dislike for God's Word, or at least a portion of it, should expect no favors from God. The rule given us by which we can try the spirits is this: "We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know ye the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (I John 4: 6).

People who will not hear Christ and His apostles do not know God, are not of God. All who know God will hear Christ and His apostles. It is a very easy matter to try the spirits; it is done by the Word of God. The Word of God says: "The word of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Psalm 19: 17). Now the test is,

which will you hear? Jesus, speaking of the kingdom, says: "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8: 11).

The word, the seed, is sown in the heart, and brings forth good fruit. The begetting is by the word. "Though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel" (I Cor. 4: 15; James 1: 18).

Being born again is by the Word, by obeying the Word, the incorruptible seed. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (I Peter 1: 23). "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3: 5).

Religious people who are in error, or have the spirit of error, will not hear Christ and His apostles in the Scriptures cited. Those who know God will hear; they have the spirit of truth. The Word is the drawing power of God to draw men to Christ. "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6: 44, 45). It was Jesus who explained how men come to Him. Those who claim that the Holy Spirit in conversion operates independent of the written Word will not hear Jesus relative to the drawing power of God; they can not believe Jesus and at the same time hold to their claim that the Spirit operates independent of the written Word. The Word of God works effectually in the believer. "When ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (I Thess. 2: 13).

The Scriptures contain many statements which show that the work of God, of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, in conversion is effected by the Word of God. That which is accomplished by the Word of God is of God, of Christ, of the Holy Spirit. To be born of the incorruptible seed by the Word of God is to be born of God, of the Spirit.

To be born again, is to be born of water and the Spirit. To be born of water and of the Spirit is being born of God, of the Spirit, of the incorruptible seed by the Word of God, born again. One birth. Remember that the way to try the spirits is by the Word of God. Those who know God will hear the Word of God. Those who are not of God will not hear the Word of God, but rely on their experience.

The Word of God is the word of His grace. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20: 32). God's grace is worded. God's grace teaches. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly, in this present world" (Tit. 2: 11, 12). The saved are saved by God's worded grace, by living according to its teaching. God's implanted (worded grace) is able to save your souls." "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted (planted) word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1: 21).

The Gentiles were saved by grace, by obeying God's worded grace, God's Word. "Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved" (Acts 11: 14). Brethren (preachers), those who think that the Holy Spirit acts in conversion on the sinner's heart, independent of the written Word of God, are wrong. But we, as preachers, must exercise patience, kindness, love, in our preaching. After preaching God's Word, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God's power to save every one that believeth, all can be ruined, destroyed by, a few unkind words.

I conclude with Eph. 3: 4. "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." By reading the revelation of the Spirit we can understand that which angels, prophets, princes, the natural man, and the sons of men in other ages of the world could not know. Read the Word of God and believe it is my last word.

AN UNCOMMON ANSWER TO A COMMON QUESTION

AN UNCOMMON ANSWER TO A COMMON QUESTION

By John Straiton

READINGS:—Matt. 19: 16-22; Mark 10: 17-22; Luke 18: 18-23.

The question is, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" And the answer is, "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." The question and answer are found in the incident of the rich young ruler coming to Jesus. This incident is one of the few events of which a record is to be found in all three synoptic Gospels. This shows the deep impression that the event must have made upon the mind of those who witnessed it; and the importance of it to us, in that the Holy Spirit has guided them to report it. Are we of the present day required to obey Christ's command to the ruler? And if not required to obey, upon what principles are we freed from it?

To understand the Saviour's treatment of the ruler, we must know how he viewed our Saviour. To us Jesus is divine, and we almost forget and practically deny His humanity. By His more than 1,800 years' possession of all authority in heaven and earth, His power, His glory, and His eternal dignity are firmly impressed upon us. In our minds we have placed Him on a plane far above us, and pushed Him away from us, overlooking that He is one with us in all that is truly human—that He took upon Himself our nature and shared all our sorrows, temptations, and trials. And—

> **"Though now ascended up on high,**
> **He bends on earth a brother's eye;**
> **Partaker of the human name**
> **He knows the frailty of our frame."**

But to his contemporaries Jesus was a man, and nothing more. His deity was either unknown or ignored. Many must have watched the development of His life and public ministry with deep and intense interest, who yet hesitated

to identify themselves with the carpenter of Nazareth and His holy teaching, lest He should prove to be something different from their expectation. The ruler seems to have been one of this class. He watched with growing interest Him

> "Whose voice, fame says, subdued the storm—
> From whom the evil spirits ran!"

He had watched so long that he had almost allowed to escape from him the opportunity of hearing from the lips of Jesus something of the mystery and meaning of life. He decided, ere it was too late. Gathering his long, flowing robes about him, he rushed with impetuous haste after Jesus. When he reached Him, he knelt on the dusty highway and asked, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" Who is there that is not impressed with the earnestness and humility of the young man—that he, a wealthy ruler, should run after and prostrate himself before a poor, homeless, wandering preacher? His question shows his piety and teachableness. He was more anxious about his salvation and eternal well-being than many, perhaps, of those I am addressing. Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and no wonder, for he was an amiable young man. Yet there was a touch of flattery in his salutation, "Good Master," which Jesus did not allow to pass unrebuked. Jesus was good and had every right to the title, but as the young man gave it without a full knowledge of the nature of Jesus, it could not be accepted unquestioningly.

To the ruler's question our Saviour's first reply was, "Keep the commandments." The ruler was disappointed and downcast. He had come expecting to hear something novel and startling from the Galilean Rabbi, and instead of that he only received the old hackneyed answer which he had heard from his orthodox teachers all his life. Not satisfied that Jesus can only mean, what he had always known, the ruler asked, "Which commandments?" Jesus referred him to the second table of the decalogue. "All these," said the ruler, "I have kept from my childhood up, what lack I yet?" It was a bold assertion that he had kept the commandments as given by Moses, and yet it is neither impossible nor improbable that he may have kept

them so far as outward overt acts were concerned. But when Jesus re-enacted them, He filled them with a deeper meaning. "Thou shall not kill," said Moses; and so long as a man did not take away the life of another the law did not condemn him as a murderer. Under Christianity, he that hateth his brother is declared to be a murderer in his heart. Under the old covenant adultery was forbidden; under the new the lustful look is equally condemned as sinful, as well as the deed itself. The commandments, as thus expanded and explained by Christ, would very likely have condemned the boastful young ruler. It is certain that, tried by the high standard of Christian morality, none living can say they are sinless and so need not the Saviour.

Notwithstanding his commandment-keeping, the ruler felt conscious that he was not entitled to eternal life. He asked, "What lack I yet?" He desired to be perfect, and so Jesus told him that he yet lacked one thing, that if he really wished to be perfect he must sell all that he had and give to the poor, and become a personal follower of the despised and homeless Jesus. For a moment he stood at the threshold of eternal felicity and glory: but for a moment only. He hesitated and was lost. On the one hand lay his home, his comforts, his fame, his influence, and his wealth; on the other was poverty, and scorn, and suffering, *and Jesus and eternal life.* It was too great a sacrifice. He made a grand refusal and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Do not the Lord's conditions of eternal life, as laid down to the rich ruler, seem very severe and stringent, almost if not altogether too severe and stringent? Who amongst us at the present day would be able and willing to carry them out? Not many, I am afraid. Yet this command of Jesus, like all His other commands, is marked by love and wisdom. It can easily be justified. God is the Giver of all things. As such, He has a perfect right to ask any or everything to be given up at any time.

> **"Whate'er we fondly call our own**
> **Belong to heaven's great Lord;**
> **The blessings lent us for a day**
> **Have soon to be restored."**

Now, Christ must have the first place in the heart and soul. He that loveth father or mother, house or lands more than Christ, is unworthy of Him. It is very evident that the ruler loved his wealth, and when put to the test loved it more than he loved Jesus. He was one of those who trust in their riches. If he had become a follower of Christ he would very soon have lost all his wealth. In the bitter persecutions that took place after the Ascension, thousands were driven from home, penniless wanderers. The church at Jerusalem was in a state of chronic poverty for many years, and we can not doubt that the churches in Judea shared their circumstances. Surely, it was better for him, then, voluntarily to sell his property and spend it to the glory of God and the good of suffering humanity than to be compelled in a few years to leave it all behind him when he would be fleeing for his life. In this case Christ's command is abundantly justified.

We now ask, is it binding on us? In other words, are we required to obey Christ's command to the young ruler? If the New Testament teaches we are, we ought to do it. If it does not, we are free. If you adopt as a principle that all Christ's personal dealings with anxious enquirers are literally binding ones, then there is no way of escape. We must sell all we have and give to the poor. The second part no one can obey. Christ is not personally here, so we can not follow Him from city to city, and from town to town. Seeing we can not obey the second condition, there is reason to think that the first also is not for us.

Some have declared that they would be saved in the same way as the thief on the cross, others that they would be saved like Zacchaeus. Those who thus speak, speak unthinkingly; they can not thus be saved. To be saved as the thief was, it would be necessary to bring Jesus down from His throne in glory and to crucify the Son of God afresh. Not only this, but it would be necessary for the one who thus seeks for salvation to be nailed on a cross beside Jesus and die that day. Who is there so mad as to seek salvation in that fashion?

When the Son of Man walked this earth He had power to forgive sins, and did forgive sins, how and where

He pleased. To this one He said, "Sell all thou hast;" to another, "Come down from the tree;" and to a third, "Thy faith has saved thee, go in peace." These varying specific commands are not, and in some instances could not, be obeyed now, but the principle that underlies them is of universal application. That principle is implicity confidence in, and obedience to, the Lord Jesus. It was in this the ruler failed and so lost the blessing.

After Jesus had, by His death, made purification of sins, and before He ascended to take His seat on the right hand of the Majesty on High, He gave complete instructions to His apostles how they were to forgive sins, or rather the terms they were to declare, on which He himself would forgive sins. They were not left to gather from the observed dealings of Jesus the principle on which He pardoned, and to apply this principle according to the best of their ability. They received due and formal instructions, which are recorded in the closing chapters of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. And more than that, they were promised and received the Holy Spirit, to guide and teach them in the understanding and teaching of His orders. How foolish then to bind ourselves to an individual case, selected at random from the personal ministry of Jesus—a ministry which we are not under, and a case which may in no way correspond with ours—and to neglect the last instructions of Jesus, which are divinely intended for us, and are specially suited to our needs.

As recorded by Luke, these orders read: "And Jesus said unto them, thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem; and ye (apostles) are witnesses of these things; and, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endowed with power from on high." Here we have only one of the conditions---repentance—the others must be gathered from the parallel places. But observe that this preaching was to all nations, a thought fully borne out by the others. It is a world-embracing promise, and from Matthew's account we learn that it was to endure till the

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end of the world. In other words, these instructions are for all people and for all time, therefore we are under them. The other conditions, as learned from Mark, are belief and baptism—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Belief and repentance are internal—a state of mind and soul brought about by the Gospel. Baptism is an external act and a manifestation of the internal condition of the person baptized. On these terms Christ has promised pardon to us—to all.

But someone objects—"The thief on the cross was not baptized, and I don't see why I should be baptized." You might as well object that the ruler was not told to repent and that Zacchaeus was not told to believe, and that, therefore, you don't see why you should be asked to believe and repent. It is sufficient that it was Christ's will to give to each of these cases its own command and promise. Those who accepted and obeyed were blessed; those who disobeyed had to go away sorrowful, without the blessing. The Lord has made His will known to you. It is believe, repent and be baptized. You have no choice, but accept it as it stands, or reject it and suffer the consequences.

Let me close with an illustration. A rebellion has broken out in a distant part of the king's dominions; in a place like India, where many petty chiefs and kings rule in subordination to the king. As soon as the news reaches the king he places himself at the head of his forces and marches to subdue the rebels. After a short but vigorous campaign success crowns his arms. Chiefs and leaders come from every direction imploring pardon from the king. To this prince the king says—"You must go to your own city in peace. Your humility and prompt petition have saved your life." To another he says—"You and all your followers must surrender your arms within a week, or your lives are forfeited for your crime." Promptly the weapons are handed in, and the leader and his followers departed, pardoned and free. To a third the king says—"Sign the oath of allegiance to me and I will pardon you." The oath is signed and the man leaves the king's presence forgiven and at liberty. Important

duties now require the king's presence at his capital, and he departs for it. But before leaving he gives to the officers whom he leaves in charge to subdue the outlying districts, instructions to issue a proclamation promising pardon to all rebels who will surrender their arms and take the oath of allegiance to the king before a given day. The king is not long away till a brother of one of those whom he had personally pardoned presents himself to the officers beseeching pardon. They tell him the conditions. To these he objects that his brother was pardoned by the king himself and allowed to retain his arms, and he does not see why he should be treated differently. To this the officers reply, that when the king was here he could pardon as he pleased, but now that he is away they must be guided by his instructions and adhere to his orders. The rebel may plead as he likes to be treated like his brother, the officers return the same reply—they have no power to alter the king's commission.

King Jesus is no longer in person on this earth—He has gone to His capital. Before leaving He told His officers to proclaim the good news of pardon to every creature, he that believed and was baptized would be forgiven; he that rejected this offer would be lost. People sometimes ask, "Can I not be saved without baptism?" and our only answer is, "We have no authority to change the Lord's commission." Let us be warned by the example of the young ruler. He preferred his own will and way to Christ's, and went away from Christ a sorrowful, disobedient, unforgiven sinner. Let no one here be so foolish. Unwavering and unquestioning allegiance to Christ and to His teaching, as given through the apostles, is necessary to salvation. Be persuaded, then, believe and obey the Gospel.

THE BIBLE AND CONSCIENCE

THE BIBLE AND CONSCIENCE

By W. S. Long

"Holding faith and a good conscience" (I Tim. 1: 19)

God has many interesting and instructive things to say to man about conscience and its office and duty respecting the Bible. He has placed in our hands a perfect law and has put into our souls a perfect faculty called conscience, and has clearly shown us the danger of rejecting the one or abusing the other. If man is true to himself and does not violate conscience, or spurn the Bible, these two precious gifts from God will prove a blessing to him in time and eternity.

But it seems that the faculty called conscience has lost its power in the conduct of millions of humanity today. And why is this so? This is an age in which most of us live in a mad rush. It is hurry! hurry! hurry! Some are forced to hurry to hold a position and make a living; others rush continually to seek worldly pleasure; and others for the desire for money. There is but little time given for reading and meditation upon God's Word. Because of this manner of life, conscience is deadened and not permitted to work in the soul as Jehovah intended.

It is the duty of every one to know the true office of conscience and its relation to Bible truth, so that he may be true to his conscience as well as to the Bible. That more light may shine into your hearts on this subject, let me ask you to hear what God's Word has to say regarding the state of the conscience of both good and bad men. In Acts 23: 1 we read of a good conscience, "And Paul looking steadfastly on the council said, Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day." "For if a man see thee who hast knowledge sitting at meat in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be emboldened to eat things sacrificed to idols?" (I Cor. 8: 10). Speaking of an evil conscience, Paul says, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,

having our hearts sprinkled from an *evil* conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10: 22). Sin will cause the conscience to be defiled or corrupted. "Through hypocrisy of men that speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron" (I Tim. 4: 2). "Unto the pure, all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Tit. 1: 15). So we see that some may have a *good* conscience, others a corrupt or *defiled* conscience, and still others a *dead* conscience.

The answer to some important questions may better help us to understand what God would have us know respecting our own conscience.

I. What is Conscience? Putting all the definitions given into one, we may say: Conscience is that faculty, or moral power that urges man to do what he believes to be right and warns him to shun that which he believes to be wrong. Some have said, "It is the voice of the intellect"; "The eye of the soul." The Spiritual eye must have light. God's Word is light. (Psa. 119: 105.)

II. What is the office of conscience? What relation does it bear to the Word of God? History says that our fathers fled from religious oppression to new country, that they might worship God "according to the dictates of their own conscience." Their desire should have been to worship God "according to the dictates of His Word." It is not the office of conscience to be our guide, or to dictate our course. The Bible is our only infallible guide, and when the Bible speaks, conscience will urge obedience to truth. Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8: 32).

III. This brings us to another very important question: Should one follow his conscience, and if so, will he be right? That depends upon the teaching he has received. To be conscientious and sincere one should follow his conscience, yet if he is taught error, even a good conscience would guide him to walk in error. Take the noted example of Paul. He was taught to believe that Christ was an imposter, and that the Gospel was false. He had a good conscience, "void of offense toward God and man"

(Acts 24: 16), yet he was wrong, and the "chief of sinners." What was wrong with Paul? He had a good conscience and was following its dictation. Here we find that a good conscience may dictate a course that would lead a man to destruction. Then where is the trouble? This is the answer: Just as soon as Paul heard the truth and believed the words of Christ, that very same conscience within him urged him to turn from his sinful course and be the friend of Christ.

IV. Just here a very important question arises. What is the difference between a good conscience and a defiled, or evil, conscience?

A good watch might be set by the wrong standard and mislead you. Paul's conscience was set by the wrong standard. If a watch, properly set, does not vary, we say it is true and dependable—a good watch. A bad watch will not be true to the standard. Just so with respect to conscience. The Bible is the standard, but if we reject that Divine standard, and are unfaithful to our convictions, our conscience will be defiled. To such characters the preaching of the Gospel has but little effect. Such was the state of the people described in Rom. 1: 21-26. They "changed the truth of God into a lie." "Their foolish hearts were darkened." Men who are true to their convictions and ready to receive the truth, even if they are as far from God as was Paul, when the pure Gospel is preached to them, conscience will assert itself, and they will arise, and obey God as quickly as did Paul.

MISLEAD BY FALSE STANDARDS

Many noble souls are deceived and misled by the wrong standard. Some are taught that just so they live a moral life and do some deed of kindness occasionally, like the good Samaritan, they will go to heaven at death. They overlook the positive law of Christ. "Ye must be born again." "Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3: 5), and, "not every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7: 21). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"

(Mark 16: 16). How clearly does the Bible teach that all men must enter into Christ's body. He is the true vine and we are commanded to enter into Him and *abide* in Him. Our good deeds are ever to be commended, but they must be done in the name of Christ. The small deed, such as "the cup of cold water," and the greater gift such as giving a million dollars will not be pleasing to God unlesss done in the name of Christ, and not in the name of a moral man. When Christ's law comes to the heart then conscience will not rest but will urge men to enter Christ's Kingdom, and follow no longer the false standard. Thousands of good people have been misled by the creeds and confessions of faith. Take this illustration: Suppose seven men should meet at the President's mansion in Washington, D. C., and each man should take from his pocket a watch to see what he thought was the time of day. The first man says, it is 10:30 a. m., the second man affirms that 11:30 a. m. is the hour, the third 11:15 a. m., the fourth 11:45, and so on, each one has a different time and no two agree. Here are seven men, each having a different standard of time, yet each one in in error. Their watches, *every one*, is an excellent time keeper. What is the manner? Nothing wrong with the watches, only they are set by a false standard. While they stand there differing and disputing about the hour a clock is heard to strike the hour. It is a clock in the President Coolidge's office which has been set by the correct time. God made the great time-keeping clock of the universe—sun, moon and stars—His time has never failed. Not one second slow or one second fast—so this clock in the President's office is set by God's time and is correct, of course. These seven men walk into the President's office and set their watches by this one clock and now they are of one heart and one mind regarding the time of day. This illustration will serve to show how men may differ in religion and at the same time have a good conscience. Seven men meet together to talk of unity, and how they may be of the same mind and same heart, and speak the same thing, and have the same name. But the seven men differ widely—no two agree, yet they each have a good conscience—or say they

do. Where is the trouble? Is conscience to blame? Is the Bible at fault? No. It is the standard by which they have been guided all through the past. One has set up some creed as his standard, another takes some confession of faith for a guide; another is governed by the teaching of some great man. "In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrine the precepts of men" (Matt. 9: 15). Still another has taken father or uncle for a standard. While those seven men are seriously differing, and having bitter dispute, some one walks into the room and places a Bible on the table. One of these seven men take this Bible in his hand and says, "Brethren, here is God's Word, let's take it for our standard and our guide and we can not make a mistake." The moment they agree to let the Bible be their standard they become one, and the conscience of each urges him to follow the Bible. Let us imagine that three noted men from different parts of the world meet to discuss religion. The first man to speak is from Japan. He says, "Brethren, I believe in Buddah, 'The Enlightened One.' His teaching was the faith of my fathers, and I am devoted to Buddah's doctrine, and I have a good conscience." The second man is one of the most talented statesmen in Asia. He says: "I am sure you are in great error. Buddah was a false teacher and his doctrine is untrue. Your conscience may approve of what you do in your worship, but you have no hope. My doctrine is, 'there is one God and Mohammed is his prophet.' The Koran is the word of God, and is my guide, and my conscience approves of what I do." Then the third man steps forward from a most wonderful cathedral in the great city of Rome. He is a man of great letters and stands high in the intellectual world. He says, "Brethren, I have made a careful study of the doctrines of Buddah and Mohammed, and know they are false. The Pope is infallible and is filled with inspiration for God. My religion is to trust my all in his hands. So I believe in the Catholic church, and whatever change the Pope sees good to make in the commands of the Bible will be approved of God." The Pope is anti-Christ, but those who believe in him do not realize it. (II Thess. 2: 4-12; II John 1: 8, 9.)

Now here are three intellectual men, each believes his respective teaching is divine, and all the rest are in error. Each have a good conscience. Let these men take the Bible, read it carefully, and they will see that their leaders are anti-Christ, and there is no foundation whatever for Buddah, Mohammed or the Pope being divine.

Now, let's put the Bible and conscience to work in their respective office, and see the result. The Bible plainly declares that Jesus Christ is the Saviour of man; that all men should believe in Him, repent of their sins, confess Him to be the Son of God, be baptized in His name, and then live faithful to Him till death. This we must do to escape hell and reach heaven. When men hear this, and believe it, then conscience cries out with unrest day and night and says, this is divine truth, and is right; obey it and be saved.

Having become a Christian, conscience is more alive than ever, having been made stronger by its activity. The Bible says, "Do good unto all men; follow the Golden Rule: be honest in all your dealings; be generous in supporting the church; help the weak and poor; care for the widows and orphans, and keep yourself unspotted from the world." Conscience, like the needle of the compass, will point to this true course and urge man to follow it.

Every man is responsible for the state of his own conscience. If it is defiled, corrupted, or seared, it is because he has rejected God's Word, and closed his eyes to divine light.

A radio set, properly adjusted, will receive a song from New York, or even from far-away California, and bring every word and note clear and distinct to the ear. If one will keep one's conscience in tune with God's message every note of divine truth will be heard, understood, believed, gladly received and obeyed. That is Paul's admonition: "Holding faith and good conscience."

TAKING CARE OF CONSCIENCE

It would be a great sin for any man to abuse any faculty with which God has blessed his body or soul. What a crime it would be for any one to deliberately punch out his own eyes or destroy his hearing. We could

not think of any one so heartless as to treat his body so. The faculties of the soul are even more precious, and we should take care not to destroy the eye of the soul—the conscience. Solomon said, "Remember thy Creator in the the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shall say, *I have no pleasure in them.* Again God says, "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick" (Prov. 13:12). "He that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath" (Mark 4:25). A man can so abuse his eyes that they become *sick* (inflamed) and even die, so to speak, and he becomes blind. Equally true is it that a man can so abuse his conscience till he will become spiritually blind. Then will he say, "I have no pleasure" in divine truth; "the heart is sick," and the spiritual asperations are dead; conscience is "seared with a hot iron," and that man is lost forever.

We are made to wonder why thousands of people who seem to know the Gospel of Christ, and what they ought to do to be saved, turn a deaf ear to all earnest pleadings of Christ and reject him till they die in disobedience and sin. Is it not because they have deferred duty till they have, in a great measure, destroyed that precious faculty called conscience? Again we are perplexed and amazed when we see brethren, who know the will of God, and who once walked in the "Light of the Lord," but who have gone back into a life of sin and disobedience. Often their best friends go to them and plead with them to return to the church and be faithful, and then warn them of the consequence with the words, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God" (Heb. 10:31). Such warnings and exhortations fail to lead them back to his father's house if conscience has not been abused. This is why conscience is such an important thing in the life and conduct of every man.

CONSCIENCE AND CHARACTER

When men are true to themselves, and do not destroy the workings of conscience within their own souls, it will safeguard their course and have much to do with building their character. The Bible tells every man to "shun the very appearance of evil;" to live a pure life; to enter

into Christ and walk in him. Then will conscience cry out, and urge him to take that course. The voice of Christ says, "follow me." Conscience says, "this do and live." "Now the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" (I Tim. 1: 5).

SIMON MAGUS

SIMON MAGUS

By B. C. Goodpasture

"And Philip went down to the City of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ. And the multitudes gave heed with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip, when they heard, and saw the signs which he did. For from many of those that had unclean spirits they came out, crying with a loud voice; and many that were palsied, and that were lame, were healed. And there was much joy in that city.

"But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who beforetime in the city used sorcery, and amazed the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one; to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is that power of God which is called Great. And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries. But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. And Simon also himself believed; and being baptized, he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed" (Acts 8: 5-13).

THE GOSPEL IN SAMARIA

After His resurrection, Jesus outlined to the apostles His plan of procedure in the evangelization of th world. "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1: 8).

According to instructions, the apostles, having received the Holy Spirit, began, on the first Pentecost after the ascension, in the City of Jerusalem, the great work of preaching the Gospel to every creature. The city

which had denied and crucified Jesus was first to hear His claims vindicated. God, in His great mercy, sent first to the men who had slain His Son the tidings of salvation. These men had thought Jesus was an imposter. They did not think He would rise from the dead. They had the best facilities in the world for testing the facts of the Gospel. Yet they were first to be converted to Christ. Three thousand in one day. The Gospel spread over Jerusalem until it provoked hatred and bitter persecution at the hands of the Jews "against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the apostles."

"And Philip went down to the City of Samaria, and proclaimed unto them the Christ." Under ordinary conditions a Jew would not likely have done this; "For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans" (John 4: 9). The Jews and the Samaritans were related both in respect to religion and blood, yet differed in both enough to be on hostile terms. Philip was carrying out his marching orders—Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. Great success crowned the labors of Philip in Samaria. People who had long been in the meshes of religious error and under the blighting spell of sorcery were brought to life, freedom and salvation in Christ Jesus. Even Simon, the sorcerer, who had long amazed the people with his sorcery, believed and was baptized.

SIMON THE SORCERER

All that is certainly known of Simon is found in Acts 8: 9-24. Josephus, the Jewish historian, tells of a Simon who was employed by Felix, the Roman procurator, as a magician, to persuade Drusilla, wife of Azizus king of Emesa, to leave her own husband and marry him. This friend of Felix, Simon, a Jew born in Cyprus, though a pretented magician, could hardly have been identical with the Simon of Acts, who, according to Justin Martyr, himself born in the country of Samaria, was a Samaritan, born in the town of Gitta. Neander, the renowned

church historian, was "tempted to consider them as identical;" but later admitted that "the identity must be left rather doubtful." There were many who wore the name Simon in the days of the early church. We must be content to *know* about the one in question only what Luke has had to say concerning him.

However, we know that Simon was a sorcerer, that he used sorcery successfully among the people of Samaria, that "they all gave heed, from the least unto the greatest, saying, This man is that power of God which is called Great. And they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed them with his sorceries." It is a little difficult to arrive at the meaning of the term "sorcerer" as here used. Adam Clark has this to say: "Our word *sorcerer,* from the French *sorcier,* which, from the Latin *sors,* a lot, signifies the using of lots to draw passages concerning the future; a custom that prevailed in all countries, and was practised with a great variety of forms". Upon the word of the Greek text, *mageuon,* Prof. Vincent observes: "Only here in New Testament. One of the wizards so numerous throughout the East at that time, and multiplied by the general expectation of a great deliverer and the spread of the Messianic notions of the Jews, who practised upon the credulity of the people by conjuring and juggling and soothsaying."

It seems that the sorcerer stood in readiness to render any kind of service that might be desired. He would, according to Prof. Whitehouse, in Hasting's Bible Dictionary, "seek to accomplish such ends as causing one's neighbor's house to catch fire, bringing a hailstorm on his field, depriving his cows of milk, making his child die of illness, causing domestic brawls, or visiting himself with sudden death. In fact, the ancients were accustomed to attribute all such disasters to a malignant demon, sorcerer, or witch; and the possession of an uncanny look about the eyes, would expose the male or female possessor of these characteristics to the unenviable reputation of being a sorcerer or sorceress. Especially old women of unusual ugliness were credited with dealings

with the dark supernatural world. Even men distinguished by brilliant acquirements or clever play would be liable to the suspicion of sorcery."

The well-established sorcerer enjoyed a profitable business. "A certain maid" of Philippi, "having a spirit of divination * * * brought her masters much gain by soothsaying" (Acts 16: 16). And the magicians at Ephesus seem to have prospered in the practice of their magical arts until they came under the influence of Paul's preaching. This wrought such a change in them that "not a few of them * * * brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver" (Acts 19: 19). It is quite likely that Simon, to whom all gave heed from the least unto the greatest, found in the practice of a kindred art, a source of great gain. But he, like the magicians at Ephesus, was destined to hear a preacher who could offer more in truth than he himself ever offered in pretense.

SIMON THE BELIEVER

"And Simon also himself believed; and being baptized, he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed."

Luke, the historian of the Acts, delights in recounting the conflicts and victories of the early church. Especially does he report the first clashes of Christianity with other systems. Acts 2 relates the victory of the Gospel over Judaism on Pentecost; Acts 8: 1-13 tells how the arts of the sorcerer were swept away by the onslaughts of the faith; Acts 17 relates the classic meeting of Christianity and heathen philosophy. The Epicureans and Stoics suffer at the hands of Paul.

Philip won a decisive victory in Samaria. He preached not himself but Christ. The wonders he performed were not by any sleight of hand or trick of the fakir, but were genuinely wrought by the power of God. He presented truth so that error lost when in its presence and in comparison with it. The people of Samaria,

though they had been for a long time amazed by the magical tricks of Simon the sorcerer, "believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus" and "they were baptized, both men and women." But this was not all. The Gospel went on "conquering and to conquer." "Simon also himself believed; and being baptized, he continued with Philip." This is very unusual that a great leader of a false system should be turned away from it to the truth. No one saw the difference between the tricks of the sorcerer and the genuine miracles of Philip clearer than Simon. He could amaze the people of Samaria with his juggling, but he himself was "amazed" by the signs wrought by Philip. He naturally would have been slow to accept as genuine the miracles Philip performed, but he would have been equally quick to discern them as false if they had not been true. He was acquainted with the ways of the fakir, but Philip was different. Simon "believed" and was "amazed."

But the genuineness of Simon's faith has been questioned. Prof. Hackett, in his, in many respects, admirable Commentary on Acts, says: "The verb ("believed," parenthesis mine) describes him with reference to his supposed or apparent state, not his actual position. He may have been not wholly insincere at first, but soon showed that he had no correct views of the Gospel, that he was a stranger to its power." We naturally wonder how Prof. Hackett knew that Luke was describing Simon's "supposed or apparent state." Luke also tells us that the Samaritans "believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ." Does the verb "believed" describe their "supposed or apparent state?" By what law of language can it mean real faith in verse 12 and "supposed" faith in verse 13? Luke uses the same word to describe what Simon did that he uses in describing what the Samaritans did; but Prof. Hackett does not *think* they did the same. How are we to know when the Bible is describing a man's real state and when it is describing his "supposed" state if the language employed is exactly the same? The lan-

guage of the text indicates emphatically that Simon did exactly what the Samaritans did. Note, "And Simon also himself believed; and being baptized, he continued with Philip." What is the force of "also?" *In the same manner (as something else); likewise.*" Simon "believed" in like manner as the Samaritans. Whatever they did he did. "Also" means this or it means nothing. What is the force of "himself"? It is intensive. It emphasizes the fact that even Simon, who had given out that he himself was some great one and had been accepted as such, was along with the Samaritans brought to faith in Christ Jesus. Commenting on the original of the expression, "And Simon also himself believed," in his Commentary on Acts, Meyer said: "Also on his part, like the other Samaritans, *he became believing.* . . . Entirely at variance with the text is the opinion that Simon regarded Jesus only as a great magician and worker of miracles, and not as the Messiah, and only to this extent believed on Him. He was, by the preaching and miracles of Philip, actually moved to faith in Jesus as the Messiah." Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16: 15); and it is said of Simon that he believed and was baptized (Acts 8: 13). If we can rely upon the Bible we must conclude that Simon was saved from his past sins. But his subsequent conduct is brought forward as evidence of his hypocrisy.

SIMON THE BACKSLIDER

"Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John; who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for as yet it was fallen upon none of them; only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit."

It is urged that, if Simon had been sincere in his acceptance of the Gospel, he would never have made this wicked proposal to Peter. Suppose we admit, for the time being, that Simon was a hypocrite all the way through. What could have been the motive of his hypocrisy? Christianity was unpopular everywhere. Philip was in Samaria as a result of persecution in Jerusalem. He did not pretend to believe with the idea of receiving power to convey the Holy Spirit by the laying on of his hands. There is no evidence that he knew anything about this at the time he believed, for the apostles had not yet come down from Jerusalem. Luke tells when and why he submitted his wicked offer to Peter. "Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit." It was not that Simon wanted power to perform real miracles as Philip did, but that he wanted to be enabled to convey the Holy Spirit as Peter was doing. It was *when* he saw what Peter did that he made the proposal. He could not have made such before. He knew nothing about the laying on of hands and the conveying of the Holy Spirit before Peter and John came from Jerusalem. The Holy Spirit was "fallen upon none of them; only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus."

Peter does not deal with Simon as if he had been wrong all the way along. "But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee." Why? Because Simon had pretended to believe and accept the Gospel when, in fact, he had not? No. But rather "because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money." This evil thought is the trouble. He never had this thought at the time he believed. Remember, the apostles had not come from Jerusalem at the time he believed. Peter continues. "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter." Why? Because he had been a mere pretender all along? No. Rather, "for thy heart is not right before God." Peter's condemnation is of the present proposal, not of the past conduct. Further, Peter speaks to Simon, as to an err-

ing child of God rather than as an alien sinner. "Repent therefore of this thy wichedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee." When speaking to alien sinners, as on Pentecost, he said: Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins" (Acts 2: 38). Not so in the case of Simon. He had been baptized. Baptism must have the proper prerequisites. Simon's must have had. Peter accepts it. He tells him to "repent" and "pray" for forgiveness. The alien is never commanded to pray as a condition of pardon. Peter preached baptism as a condition of remission of sins (Acts 2: 38; I Peter 3: 21) to the alien; but not regarding Simon as an alien, it is natural that he should say nothing about it in his case. Moreover, in specifying the charges against Simon, Peter uses the singular. It is "this thy wickedness," not thy sins; it is "the thought of thy heart, not the thoughts." So Peter's rebuke shows, Simon was wrong only in that he had thought to obtain the gift of God with money. If Peter went no farther back than this thought and proposal in the condemnation of Simon, why should we? Again, Peter said: "For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." He did not say that Simon was *"yet"* or *"still"* in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. Such would have been true, if Simon had been wrong from the beginning.

If Simon was not really converted, he three times passed the inspection of inspired men. Philip was "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (Acts 6: 3), but he never accused Simon of hypocrisy. He was present. He knew more about Simon than any preacher of this generation, yet there is no evidence that he ever doubted the genunieness of Simon's faith. Again Peter was baptized in the Holy Spirit and enabled to convey it by the laying on of his hands; but he never pointed out Simon as a pretender. The Spirit enabled him to expose Ananias and Sapphira. Why did he not expose Simon on his arrival from Jerusalem if the ex-sorcerer was a Christian only in profession? If he were not right, he should

have been revealed in all his hypocrisy, at once; for he would have been a dangerous man to mingle with the disciples in Samaria. Peter never questioned the conversion of Simon. Finally, and if possible, more convincingly, Luke, the inspired historian, with all the facts before him; namely, the faith, baptism, amazement, and defection of Simon: records for all ages and genrations, "And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles wrought, he was amazed." If Simon did not really believe, Luke knew it; but he says nothing about it. Luke knew of Simon's wicked offer to Peter; but he never mentioned that as evidence that Simon was never a believer. Luke says Simon believed and was baptized, and Jesus said the man who did that would be saved. This should be sufficient.

If Luke had not mentioned the later defection of Simon no one would ever have doubted his conversion. Those who think that one can not fall from grace are forced by their doctrine to deny what Luke said was true, that Simon "believed," or else admit that one can fall from grace. Rather than give up a false doctrine many say with Prof. Hackett, that "believed" describes him with reference to his "supposed or apparent state." It is a great pity that Philip, Peter and Luke did not know this. It seems that the Spirit failed to guide them into all truth. Luke wrote as if he thought he was describing Simon's real state.

SIMON'S REAL TROUBLE

Unlike Paul, he failed to forget the things which were behind, and press forward to the things which were before. He did not give "the more diligence" to make his calling and election sure. If he had done this he would never have fallen (II Pet. 1: 10). He seems to have thought of the laying on of hands in terms of his past life as a sorcerer. He could commercialize the power of imparting the Holy Spirit, perhaps he reasoned, as he had done the tricks of the magician, only with greater remuneration. He stumbled grievously, but not

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hopelessly. Whether he was ever restored to the faith is not revealed; but, in respect to this mistake, it happened to him after the old proverb, "The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire" (II Pet. 2: 22).

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